■ FOCUS

Credibility becomes a problem for the major political parties

The prestige of the leading political parties has been declining year by year.

Young people seem less interested than ever in playing an active part in politics. Local government alone retains some attraction.

The obvious explanation is that changes can still be made or prevented at the local level. *It therefore attracts talent* and commitment. But elsewhere?

Last autumn opinion polls revealed that nearly 70 per cent of 18- to 25-year-old voters felt the established parties were incapable of solving the problems faced.

To dismiss the opinion polls as nonsense, as some politicians do, is to delude oneself.

It is clear that the established parties enjoy less confidence than they used to do. Loss of competence, is the main reason.

Competence means both ability and responsibility. It can be forfeited for external reasons, such as when responsibility is transferred elsewhere, or for internal reasons, such as when the quality of office-holders declines.

Both are valid in this case.

The state assemblies are a good example. They no longer have much to do, few laws to pass and few regulations to discuss.

Reports of their sessions are seldom *of much interest unless there happens* to be a tale of trouble with some high-ranking official, an argument about schooling or news of the *Land* having burnt its fingers in some financial deal or other.

Instead, what happens is that state assemblymen cultivate close ties with Ministry officials.

They are then better able to get a hearing for complaints from their constituency, to gain approval of grant applications and to enlist public figures to attend ceremonies in connection with, say, centenary celebrations.

Everyone assiduously makes contacts with the people who "count" and tells people back home how important it is to have the right contacts.

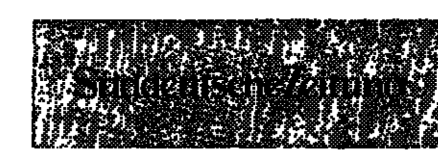
Werner Remmers, the Lower Saxon Education Minister, admits that this is the run-of-the-mill service parliamentarians provide for their constituents.

Maybe it is, in moderation, part of the job, but the distinction between administration and parliamentary control can easily fray at the edge, creating an atmosphere of jobs for the boys.

In the Bonn Bundestag competence has been lost at another level. National parliaments in the European Community countries are steadily forfeiting sovereignty to Brussels and places further afield.

The Bundestag has forfeited competence to international agreements, legal ties, EEC regulations, legislative harmonisations, financial obligations, multinational economic links and military dependences.

Politically speaking, there are sound reasons why this should be so, but parliamentarians are in any case no longer able to influence the trend much in one direction or the other.



Lobbies can prove more effective, such as farmers, managers of leading industrial conglomerates and trade unions.

That may be one reason why the debate within political parties is still alive and well, whereas parliamentary parties have grown cumbersome and unimaginative.

Much can be demanded and resolved at party conferences, whereas in parliament the MP finds out in practice how many links and restrictions there are.

Besides, there are commitments to party-political and coalition discipline, and the net outcome is that a seat in the Bundestag has grown steadily less attractive.

It follows that fewer talented men and women apply for the job, with the result that good men are few and far between and governments have few talented youngsters to fall back on.

Over the past year or two entire Cabinets have been moved around like chessmen, from Bonn to Berlin, then to Hamburg. Before long they will doubtless be recalled to Bonn.

Plans for Cabinet reshuffles in Bonn *have begun to be hamstrung by a shor*tage of qualified men and women waiting in the wings.

Must this be the case? Will advanced industrialised states in future be governed exclusively by highly qualified civil servants (who naturally still exist) and by lobby representatives and technocrats (also skilled men)?

Will mediocre parliamentarians be edged out of decision-making processes? This need not happen, but it is a possibility that is a challenge to the political parties, to their make-up and to their behaviour.

Most politicians behave as though everything were under control and problems were slowly but surely being solved and as though there would be no possible cause for complaint if only they were allowed to remain in control or, alternatively, to be given a crack of the whip.

It is most unusual for a politician not to flex his muscles and to frankly admit that he does not know enough about a subject to venture an opinion.

Seldom are politicians prepared openly to weigh the pros and cons of an issue or a decision and to shoulder a risk or admit that they are not prepared to do so.

Showing off seems to be the rule. It is a ritual and, like all rituals, has its origins. Voters evidently expect their MP to take a stand and to be virtually omniscient.

They entrust to him their worries, their aggression, the protection of their interests, their hopes.

This motivates the political fighter, influences his character and drapes an invisible ermine round his shoulders. This relationship and the expectations on which it is based end by curtailing any exchange of views.

Another point is that while people are well ware of many problems that lie ahead, this awareness is not being put to good use.

Unemployment, for instance, seems more than likely to increase over the next six to eight years, and the increase could be dramatic.

The reasons are self-evident: the low birth rates of the 60s, the decline in economic growth and effect of the microchip.

A costly reform of the pension scheme is also in the pipeline. The Constitutional Court in Karlsruhe has ruled in favour of equal treatment for the sexes.

Everyone knows that working people are going to have to pay more towards the upkeep of the jobless and pensioners, at least for a while.

The extra burden will be tolerable: one or two per cent more in social security contributions. Which is preferable: this or a slower increase in pensions?

Sociologists and politicians have been known to say that this will not be a real problem, but who will say so openly?

The media and the experts may explain the situation, but election campaigners seem incapable of doing so, and so do lobby representatives and MPs.

A seeming paradox follows. It is this: if the parties were to call on the public to take a more level-headed look at problems and show preparedness to make material sacrifices, if that is the right term, they would regain authority.

They have grown accustomed to being too undemanding of their voters, who are now giving them what they deserve for trying to fob them off with feeble arguments.

If only the parties were to make greater demands on their clientele, people would then have more confidence that their elected representatives were capable by and large of coping intellectually and financially with the problems faced. But then, and then only.

Hans Heigert

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, 5 June 1982)

Trying to come to terms with the views of the young

Nordwest Zeitung

There is much too much said about young people and much too little discussion with them. The Bundestag all-party commission of inquiry's report on Youth Protest in the Democratic State was clearly intended to remedy this.

The Bundestag debated the outcome of the commissions's work knowledgeably and level-headedly.

There were only a few polemical jibes to upset the overall impression of a Bundestag agreed in principle. But did it not perhaps come a little late in the day? Thousand of young people have joined the "Greens," or environmentalists, and other protest movements, or chosen to follow other political Pied Pipers.

No-one can say for sure whether this will prove to have been more than a seasonal fashion and a flash-in-the-pan.

Politicians who now set their caps at confidence and credibility, two of the main slogans used in the youth debate, where mistrust and misunderstanding have predominated, are in for an unpleasant surprise.

Much ground has been lost and it will not be easy to regain.

Yet no-one has so far shown for sure whether youth protest in a free and democratic society is due to shaking social foundations or to a misunderstanding of the state by young people.

Christian Democratic Bundestag MP Matthias Wissmann, chairman of the *Junge Union*, or youth branch of the CDU/CSU Opposition in Bonn, is doubtless right in saying there is no such thing as youth protest, youth dropouts or youth violence in general.

The media may have overemphasised the contrasts between young people and their elders, but they undeniably exist.

That was why there was a need to look into the reasons for a clash that is upsetting the balance of society today more than it has done in the past.

Political improvisation would not do much good. Neither would mutual recriminations, with which representatives of all parties are quick to let fire.

But it would be wrong to denote youth protest as the expression of an insuperable conflict in society today.

It does have a number of objective causes that are a challenge to practical politics. There is no need to mystify them. They are high unemployment, lack of prospects and loss of direction in the educational system.

Once these problems are dealt with, or at least tackled with a reasonable prospect of success, the negative repercussions of youth protest will be alleviated.

The speed with which the all-party commission drew up a generally convincing report would seem to bear out assumptions that parliamentarians are aware of the urgency of the problem.

This is a promising sign. It must not be a matter of saying what young people want to hear, as Social Democrat Horst Ehmke rightly noted.

But a number of conclusions must be reached. Politicians must take the lead and set the targets again, for instance, and not just follow the opinion polls and try to back their winners.

This is a shortcoming, just as it is not enough to note that most young people take a fundamentally positive view of the state.

Minorities, as in West Berlin, can present the authorities with serious problems. That is why minorities must be on the political agenda and an answer must be found to protest among the young.

A start seems to have been made.

Karl Hugo Pruys

(Nordwest Zeitung, 29 May 1982)

The German Tribune

Hamburg, 27 June 1982
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America and Russia get back to words

America and Russia are back on talking terms, initially at two levels, the diplomatic and the rhetorical. And they are not mincing words with each other.

The chilliness of the climate can be seen from the speeches to the UN General Assembly session on disarmament by Mr Gromyko and President Reagan.

It also can be seen from what little has been revealed about the third round of talks between Secretary of State Haig and Foreign Minister Gromyko.

There can be no question of either side becoming ideologically flexible let alone continuing trying to arrive at a code of behaviour in the nuclear age.

But the hard core of the debate must be seen behind the propaganda fireworks and the words.

The superpowers have had to get talking again because they have been able to do little to handle peripheral developments such as the Falklands fighting or the Israeli invasion of Lebanon.

After Mr Reagan's visits to Versailles and Bonn European allies felt the US President had grown more flexible towards the worries of the Old World.

But they were mistaken. President Reagan renewed the strict export ban

IN THIS ISSUE

affecting US firms associated with the European gas-for-pipes deal with the Soviet Union.

He also threatened German, French and Italian companies with retaliation if they continued to do business with Moscow as though nothing had happened despite the no-change situation in Poland.

It was another victory for the hawks led by Defence Secretary Weinberger in the Pentagon, in the National Security Council and at the Department of Commerce.

And it was a defeat for the US officials who have shown understanding for the European position, led by Mr Haig at the State Department.

There was, however, talk of merely the possibility of an embargo being reimposed on US grain shipments to the Soviet Union.

But the lie was given to the misleading impression gained at Versailles that Mr Reagan was prepared to turn a blind eye to the gas deal with Moscow provided Europe took a tougher credit line towards Russia.

The President unerringly kept to his view, which was that the Soviet Union must be left to bear the brunt of its domestic economic difficulties by itself.

The record-breaking Soviet arms build-up must not, he felt, be made even easier by Western aid. Pressure applied at this point could oblige the Kremlin to think again.

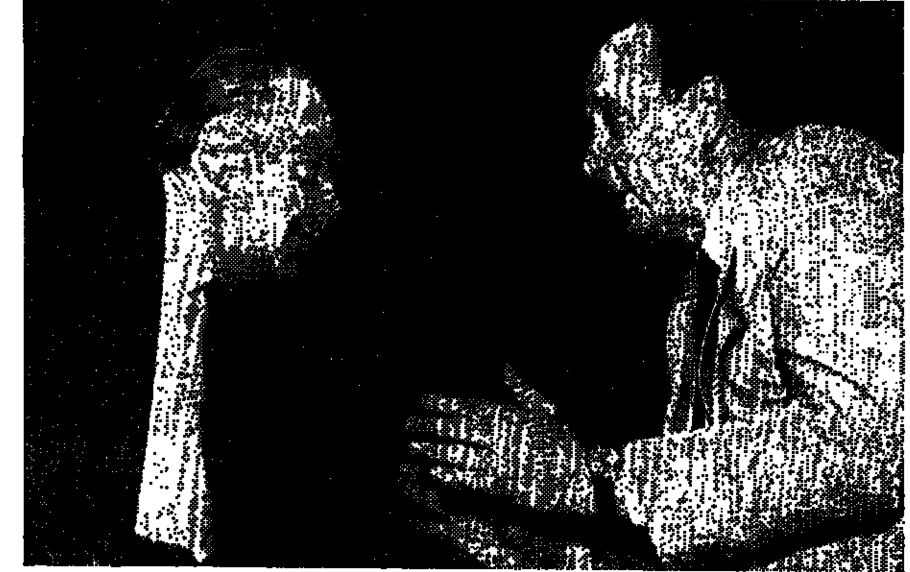
Chancellor Schmidt has misgivings about this policy. So does President Mitterrand. But their reservations fall on deaf ears as far as President Reagan is concerned.

At the United Nations he *outlined* a catalogue of Soviet misdeeds ranging from the breach of the Yalta Agreement to the crushing of the 1956 Hungarian uprising, the building of the Berlin Wall, the occupation of Czechoslovakia and Afghanistan and fomenting unrest and terrorism from the Caribbean to the Middle East.

Such were the activities of Russia as a peacebreaker. America, in contrast, had always been obliged to take arms. It was the peacemaker and had been the standard-bearer of nuclear disarmament since 1946.

In the decade of so-called detente, Mr Reagan said, the Soviet Union had carried on arming to the teeth. Was it still prepared to reduce armaments?

Mr Gromyko in his speech levelled a



Tête-à-tête

Britain's Francis Pym (left) and Bonn's Hans-Dietrich Genscher at the EEC foreign ministers' conference in Luxembourg. The Middle East and sanctions against Argentina were two of the subjects on the agenda. (Photo: dpa)

number of unpleasant accusations at the United States. Knowing he was addressing representatives of the Third World he announced details of Mr Brezhnev's solemn undertaking not to be the first to use nuclear weapons.

Soviet officials were jubilant. The ball, they felt, was now definitely in Mr Reagan's court. But he chose to ignore the challenge entirely, reiterating his own disarmament proposals instead.

Renunciation of the first strike, the US State Department said, had no specific meaning whatever when one recalled the conventional superiority enjoyed by the Warsaw Pact in Europe.

Mr Reagan feels confirmed by Britain's success in the Falklands in his belief that Mrs Thatcher was right to act in defence of a principle.

Basically he is content with the Israeli success in Lebanon too. Both, he feels, bear out his view that injustice cannot with impunity be taken lying down.

In the Pentagon Defence Department officials are satisfied with the successes US weapons have scored over Soviet weapons during Israel's campaign in Lebanon.

The outcome could be a boost for those who drew up the controversial *five-year US defence policy plan based on the postulate that Washington must* be able to successfully withstand drawn-out nuclear hostilities.

But as General Jones, the outgoing chief of the US general staff, put it, America cannot afford to fund such a strategy unless it is prepared to be snowed under by the cost.

There was no such thing as a lengthy nuclear war. Preparations must be made for a strategy that could be implemented.

It remains to be seen whether Mr Reagan really will meet Mr Brezhnev this autumn. Mr Haig and Mr Gromyko have no choice, thank heavens, but to continue their talks.

Jan Reifenberg

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 21 June 1982)

Wanted: small miracle in the Lebanon

The only way to end the conflict in the Lebanon is for a new political order to take shape on the ruins left by the Israeli invasion.

There is not much disagreement about this in the West.

It is what the French want. They strongly condemn the invasion and say Israel should get out. That is the first and foremost demand.

But the French government also says tht all troops in Lebanon must get out. Bonn and Washington agree.

What does this really mean? Does it refer to the Palestine Liberation Organisation guerillas? If so, where do they go?

That is probably what is primarily at issue in the Beirut talks by the US special envoy, Mr Philip Habib.

As long as the PLO maintains armed units in the country the authority of any central government can hardly fail to be undermined.

And as long as this is the case a consensus between Lebanese Christians and Moslems and a merger of their militias in a new Lebanese army can be ruled out.

As long as the PLO retains it arms the Christians will hold on to theirs, and so will the left-wing Moslems.

Setting up a government of national salvation as envisaged by President Sarkis can only be a patchwork job as long as the various militias remain states within a state.

It follows that the conflicts in Lebanon cannot be solved unless a solution is found to the problems of the Palestinians there.

And that is not just because Israel has declared it will not withdraw its forces until some such settlement has been reached.

Such are the conditions in which Mr Habib is trying to exert influence on the various parties in Beirut, and he has already achieved some measure of success in that leading Lebanese politicians have met for talks once more.

But the talks are pushed for time, and the key question is how the Palestinians might be persuaded to lay down their arms.

The problem is that the Palestinian question in Lebanon cannot be viewed separately from the Palestinian problem as a whole.

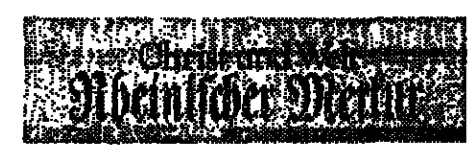
Israel is expecting final destruction of the Palestinian units in Beirut as a more likely prospect than concessions leading to a political solution.

It would be a miracle if Mr Habib under pressure of events were to be able to end this vicious circle.

(Der Tagesspiegel, 19 June 1982)

■ WORLD AFFAIRS

The tortuous path towards sweetness and light



It is back to routine after the Western economic summit in Versailles, the Nato summit in Bonn and President Reagan's visit to Berlin.

So much for spectacular scenes, declarations of principles, proclamations, receptions and demonstrations. Mr Reagan is back in Washington and Herr Schmidt made a speech on disarmament to the UN General Assembly in New York.

The headlines are made by World Cup soccer in Spain, with fighting in the Middle East taking over from fighting in the Falklands.

Agreement was reached on the danger of inflation and the need for trade sanctions at Versailles, whereupon European Finance Ministers devalued the French franc and revalued the German mark.

Was this move the first consequence of the Versailles summit or a belated admission of national economic mismanagement?

After the summits the world is certainly no better and no simpler, so it is hardly surprising that everyone was at pains to emphasis how well he had done.

President Reagan reassured his fellow-countrymen that the United States was respected again by its allies and by the Soviet Union.

The European attributed to their persistent influence Mr Reagan's show of moderation and willingness to disarm.

It may all seem petty, but let us accept such national weaknesses if all the summitry is found to hold forth the slightest hope for the future.

This is certainly does, and largely on account of the change by the United States.

Now that Mr Reagan has offered to meet Mr Brezhnev as soon as possible and shown himself willing to negotiate and to coexist, now that he has submitted an abundance of disarmament proposals, life is so much easier for Nato.

Meeting in Bonn, the Nato leaders found it easy to say, as their basic policy principle, that: "Our aim is to establish a stable balance of power at as low a level as possible and thereby to strengthen peace and international stability."

The earlier dispute over the definition of the North Atlantic pact was forgotten. In Bonn the Nato countries felt able to assure that the pact was an indispensable means of deterring aggression by effective defence and strengthening peace by a constructive dialogue.

To accuse President Reagan of having used words too strong in Berlin about the lack of freedom and about dictatorship in the Soviet sphere is to forget the reality.

It is also to forget Nato's Bonn Declaration, in which there was no hesitation in referring to the system of violence in the Warsaw Pact.

Besides, Mr Reagan in his Berlin initiative offered flanking peace moves by the superpowers. That they were based in detail on the Helsinki accords in no way detracts from their merit.

Yet there is no ground for confidence in the current appearance of sweetness and light in ties between America and Europe. Despite summit harmony they are still poles apart.

The distance can be judged by differences of viewpoint over the term detente. The Europeans, especially the Social and Free Democratic government in Bonn, invariably emphasise the benefit a divided Continent has derived from the policy of detente.

For the Europeans detente is a kind of *limes*, or boundary, behind which they can live in peace and dream.

But the Americans have always seen (and continue to see) detente in a global context and found a fair number of flies in the ointment.

They would like the Europeans to start thinking in global terms at last too.

In the Bonn Declaration the Americans were given the thin end of the wedge, while the Europeans were acknowledged their national rights.

This may have been to their liking but basically it is a viewpoint that is egoistic and shortsighted. The world has grown so close together and interlinked that there is no longer anything in between.

The Falklands fighting profoundly affected European interests. So does fighting in the Middle East. The Europeans are no longer in a position to keep out of it all.

It is not a matter of gaining fresh zones of influence or of being handmaidens of the Americans. Europeans must play their part to ensure that the process of emancipation in many parts of the world runs along lines of national self-determination and not in accordance with dictatorial rule.

The Europeans are going to have to change their outlook unless they want to be written off as provincial.

There is an uncanny connection at this point with the large numbers of mainly young people who demonstrated on the opposite bank of the Rhine to the Bonn summit: the peace marchers.

In many ways the young merely repeated what the old had to say. They were worried. Fair enough, but only power in the world can eliminate the nuclear risk and create a brave new world.

We can only try to prevent abuse, and those who behave in any other way are behaving egoistically and shortsightedly no matter how noble their motives may be.

They want to see themselves on some island of the blessed with boundary lines protecting individual spheres that both do not exist and never will.

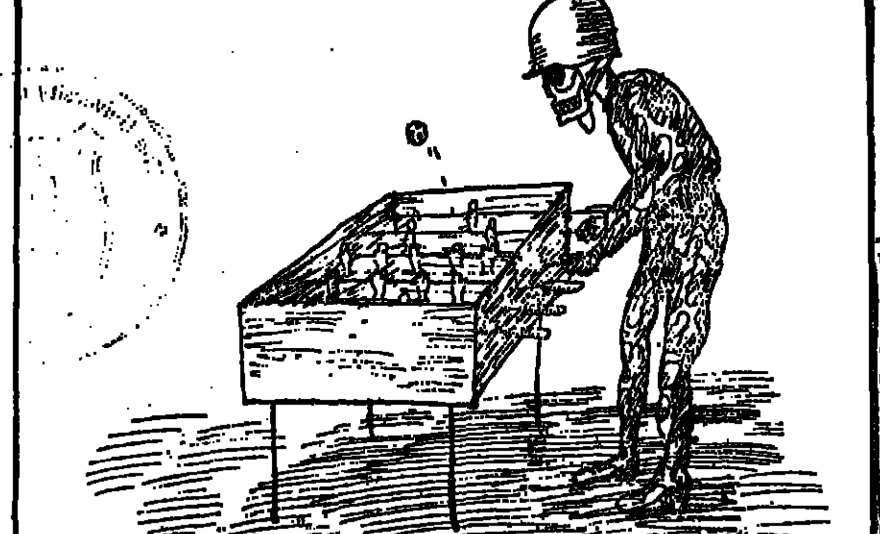
There must indeed be many changes but less in the external world than in people's minds, both old and young.

It is truth we should be seeking, not fortune, Carl Friedrich von Weizsäcker once said.

It alone can point the way to the coexistence we need if mankind is to survive.

Heinrich Stubbe

(Rheinischer Merkur/Christ und Welt, 18 June 1982)



(Cartoon: Murschetz/Die Zeit)

Brezhnev fires off a damp nuclear propaganda squib

Mr Brezhnev's declaration that the Soviet Union solemnly undertakes not to be the first to use nuclear weapons had only a limited propaganda effect.

The declaration, read out by Foreign Minister Gromyko, was intended to show up Nato as an aggressor.

But it failed. Nato cannot be accused of warmongering just because it has not greeted the Soviet announcement with shouts of delight.

Nato's declared standpoint actually goes much further than the Soviet. Nato has undertaken not to be the first to use weapons of any kind against its potential enemy, the Warsaw Pact nations.

The West might feel inclined to pay more attention to the Soviet leader's somewhat vague statement that the ideas of the nuclear freeze movement have much in common with those held by the Kremlin.

It was interesting to note that the Soviet text made no mention of the word controlled, which is so important to US Senators.

But if Moscow believes that its views are virtually identical with the nuclear freeze people, it is mistaken. Senator Kennedy and Senator Hatfield aim by their proposal to achieve more than an end to nuclear tests and the manufacture and deployment of nuclear warheads.

That is not what they have demanded from the governments of the superpowers. They insist on it all being controlled, which presupposes detailed agreement on the shape controls are to take.

Yet Mr Gromyko's UN speech otherwise sounded an encouraging note, despite its polemics against the United States and Nato. He referred to the Soviet government's intention of holding wide-ranging arms control negotiations.

That is the right way, the only approach to take, to rescue the world on the brink of destruction and to alleviate growing fears in East and West of weapons capable of wreaking indescribable destruction.

Emil Bölte

(Westdeutsche Allgemeine, 17 June 1982)

Would nuclear disarmament mean a safer planet?

Proposals for greater security in the world were submitted to the second special session of the UN General Assembly on disarmament.

Similar proposals were made in 1978.

But this time, the doubts about the wisdom and ability of diplomats and statesmen to end the vicious circle of armament have grown.

This point was made by Bonn Chancellor Helmut Schmidt to the General Assembly.

Demonstrations in both Bonn and New York, he said, had clearly shown that the demonstrators were not just idealistic pacifists and naive utopians.

Women's associations, churches, medical groups and trade unions went on to the streets in the United States to protest against the arms build-up in East and West.

The situation is not as simple as demonstrators at times make it out to be. If the nuclear powers were to take up their suggestion and lay down nublear weapons once and for all, the earth would not necessarily be a safer place.

World war might even be more likely, given that existing means of destruction are a deterrent.

Ways must be found, as Herr Schmidt told the UN, of negotiating for regional balance and of evolving partnerships in security. Above all, confidene must be established between those who are in a position to negotiate and guarantee security.

And they are the leaders of the two majors pacts. The ball is now in the US court, but even more clearly in that of the Soviet Union.

Emil Bölte

(Lübecker Nachrichten, 15 June 1982)

The German Tribune

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HOME AFFAIRS

State FDP to drop Social Democrats and run with CDU in election

The Hesse FDP has decided to leave the Land coalition with the SPD at the election in September and back the CDU.

The FDP did not decide to swap allegiance from the SPD to the CDU in Hesse because of a new-found liberalism by shadow prime minister Alfred Dregger.

It moved because of panic. It hopes that it can ride on the back of the CDU in the election in September and stay in its role as kingmaker.

The FDP thinks that even if the CDU wins an absolute majority, it would still manage to get more than the essential 5 per cent of the ballot simply by changing allegiance.

It failed the 5 per cent hurdle in Hamburg where it stuck by the SPD.

Regardless whether it works out this way or not, and regardless of the possibility that the FDP decision might be inaccurate in its assessment of Hamburg, what matters is how it all will affect Bonn.

Could it result in Chancellor Schmidt's resignation as demanded by Heiner Geissler (CDU) and Friedrich Zimmermann (CSU)?

It is curious that the persons concerned are themselves somewhat confused.

It is not often that one comes across such a refreshing straightforwardness in Bonn as FDP general secretary Günther Verheugen's statement on what the Hamburg election meant for the Bonn coalition. "We both got a punch in the nose from the voters," he said.

The conclusion is that the causes of the defeat should be examined jointly and that day-to-day politics should demonstrate the further course of Social-Liberal policy, Verheugen said.

And right he is. The half-hearted government reshuffle after the SPD congress in Munich and the employment programme — of which only the proposed rent legislation has actually reached the public — are hardly enough.

Regardless of Hamburg and Hesse, the way things stand at the moment the FDP-SPD coalition government in Bonn should not find it too hard to reach the public on a central issue: international politics.

The Economic Summit in Versailles and the Nato Summit in Bonn showed both the need for and the lack of coordinated international crisis prevention.

And the military conflicts in the Middle East and the South Atlantic have made it clear how little such political tenets as moderation and common-sense can be taken for granted.

What transpired from the two summit meetings is dramatic: growing egotism in world trade relations and a growing militarisation of international conflicts,

SONNTAGS BLATT

be it between East and West or between North and South.

There are only two bright spots in the general darkening of world politics since Salt II (Carter-Brezhnev meeting in Vienna in June 1979) and the ineffectual North-South Summit in Cancun: the current Geneva talks between the superpowers on Euro-missiles and START, the US-USSR talks on the reduction of strategic weapons, beginning this month.

Both these events are partly due to German efforts to hold on to détente despite severe setbacks.

Bonn's sticking to its basic principles also put its stamp on the Versailles talks, where Chancellor Schmidt opposed a "trade war" with the East, and on a Nato document following the Bonn meeting, expressly avowing the Alliance's commitment to the spirit of détente.

Provided the coalition leaders see this as an objective that extends beyond everyday Bonn politics, they will have enough reason to stay together for the time being.

This is still on political area where there is a basic difference between SPD/FDP and CDU/CSU views.

Granted, CDU Chairman Helmut Kohl is also trying to moderate his right wing. His speech at his party's Bonn demonstration in favour of Ronald Reagan was relatively restrained.

But the opposition's foreign policy profile in the past year or so has again been dominated by CSU Chairman Franz Josef Strauss and his Bonn spokesman, Friedrich Zimmermann.

Strauss' criticism of the double Nato decision (which he calls "illogical") and the Social-Liberal détente policy ("wrongly conceived") along with the rejection of the new strategy discussion within Nato and the CDU by Friedrich Zimmermann indicate a remarkable political rigidity.

This rigidity resembles the dogmatism of American right wingers who now find themselves increasingly disappointed by Reagan.

Experience so far with the balance of power between Kohl and Strauss shows that there is little reason to assume that the CDU opposition to Bonn's present foreign policy would become immaterial if Kohl formed a government, despite assurances to the contrary.

It is the foreign policy element that provides the coalition with an edge at the moment.

It is up to Schmidt and Genscher to decide how much importance they attach to the continuity of their détente policy in an era of increased tension.

They must take this as a yardstick in determining what is and what is not tolerable to them in matters of domestic policy.

Werner A. Perger

(Deutsches Allgemeines Sonntagsblatt, 13 June 1982)

Hesse move curtain-raiser for Bonn: sole question is timing

Even if FDP general-secretary Günther Verheugen tried to appear unperturbed when he said that the shift of the Hesse FDP to the CDU as a coalition partner did not signal a similar move in Bonn, he knew very well that the opposite was true.

Verheugen, who opposed the decision, was right on one point. The FDP does not necessarily want an immediate shift in Bonn as well.

But in the long term the change is already programmed and and the latest possible date for it is the election year 1984.

Verheugen is faced with a loyalty conflict regarding his party's chairman, Hans-Dietrich Genscher.

The enlarged FDP Presidium session (18 members) decided to put a motion for a change of partners to the party congress.

The decision to propose a coalition with Alfred Dregger's CDU was made under the impact of the election defeat in Hamburg of both the SPD and FDP.

Verheugen had only two backers: Bonn Interior Minister Gerhart Baum and his Parliamentary State Secretary Andreas von Schoeler. All others were more or less clearly in favour of the Hesse decision, having duly taken into account its consequences for the Bonn coalition.

FDP Bundestag Floor Leader Wolfgang Mischnick said that nobody had his heart in the shift to the CDU.

Although the Hesse FDP surprised nobody, it came as a political sensation.

What makes the decision so important is that not since the SPD/FDP coalition came into being in 1969 has one of the partners publicly stated an intention to make a change — and that after a partnership that, as in the case of the SPD and FDP in Hesse, was



Günther Verheugen

(Photo: Marianne von der Lancken)

"always marked by great mutual faith and the willingness to arrive at a compromise."

Tolerance of or coalition with the CDU, as in Lower Saxony, the Saarland and Berlin are of an entirely different nature.

The past few months saw growing indications of a gradual shift. The indicators were coalition statements of varying degrees of clarity: wishy-washy in Lower Saxony and fairly clear in Hamburg.

These indicators also included discussions within the FDP Parliamentary Group in which the possibility of a cooperation with the conservatives was no longer as categorically excluded as before.

The clearest indications, however, came from Bonn Economic Affairs Minister Count Lambsdorff and Foreign Minister Genscher during the budgetary discussions last autumn when the two FDP politicians planted a stumbling block in the form of what has become known in this country as *Karenztage* (a certain number of days during which no sick leave would be paid).

Though at the time Genscher removed this stumbling block when he realised that his party and Parliamentary Group were ill prepared for a break, the SPD was made aware of what was in store for it.

FDP members who are convinced that the Bonn coalition is nearing its end — not beause they want this but simply because the voters no longer suppor it — also realise that it is too late now for a shift in Bonn.

In any event, they have meanwhile redrafted their concept to the point where the FDP in Bonn will no longer seek or try to bring about such a break.

This would spare it from bearing the responsibility for such unpleasant actions as toppling the Chancellor, a constructive vote of no confidence, resignations by cabinet members and similar moves.

Bavaria's FDP has moderated or discontinued its attacks on Franz Josef Strauss. And further state elections are likely to provide additional proof of the FDP's trend towards a coalition with the conservatives.

Should Bonn's brittle coalition last until 1984, a major event could (as in 1969) be the election of a new federal president: the two major parties are again short of an absolute majority; which means that the FPD will again act as the kingmaker for the others or for one of its own. Either way, it will have to seek an ally, be it the CDU or the SPD.

But all this sounds simpler than it is. The SPD is now on the alert.

Both parties are keeping away from budget disussions. This could continue for some time. Each could put a match to the fuse at will.

It is difficult to see how a coalition whose members are watching each other with great mistrust — each waiting for the other to take a step — can

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get through the summer recess or, indeed, survive the autumn, especially with a Chancellor who has lost some of his bravado.

The SPD leadership (both in the party and the Parliamentary Group) will have to summon all its strength to stay on course.

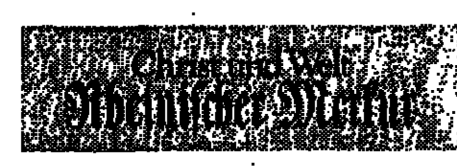
After all, most means of mollification and disciplining, such as cabinet reshuffles and votes of confidence, have been exhausted.

Klaus Dreher

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, 12 June 1982)

■ DEFENCE

Lessons of the Falklands war not lost on German naval experts



The war at sea in the South Atlantic has led to the question in Germany whether or not there is any point in maintaining a navy.

Vice-Admiral Günter Fromm, C-in-C of the Bundesmarine, answered questions on naval armament at Olpenitz, the Baltic naval base near Kiel.

The Baltic was his operational area but the Falklands fighting was very much in people's minds, especially, Argentina's success with the French Exocet missiles.

"Must not all ocean-going navies, especially Soviet units including cruisers the size of battleships, now fear for their survival in future engagements?" he was asked.

Admiral Fromm's answer was not a straight yes or no. For one, the Argentinians were lucky in that Royal Navy ships had aluminium superstructures that easily caught fire.

Unlike solid steel, aluminium burns at temperatures over 600 degrees centigrade.

British destroyers and frigates also had to operate in the South Atlantic without the air cover that would normally be provided, as part of Nato planning for the North Atlantic, by the large US aircraft carriers.

They were designed and built in the early '70s with carrier protection in mind, and no-one envisaged them being used in conditions such as existed in the Falklands zone.

Admiral Fromm was full of praise for the seamanship in running well over 100 ships for weeks from one end of the Atlantic to the other, in setting up a blockade round a heavily occupied group of islands and in then winning despite operations being restricted for political reasons.

He saw no reason why Soviet naval strategic command needed changing as a result of the Falklands campaign.

Alongside the construction of submarines of all kinds, over 400 of them, Moscow continued to regard conventional naval armament as an important means of consolidating its world power status on a par with that of the United States.

The Soviet Union had shown that despite a shortage of bases it was able to keep its warships stationed all over the world for long periods at a time.

This naval presence had a political effect on governments in Asia and Africa and could only be challenged by the use of force.

Admiral Fromm mentioned in this context the comments of Admiral Gorshkov of the Red Fleet who had frankly noted that stepping up naval armament was the best way to reach the top in power politics.

Already the strategic submarines and ocean-going warships of the Red Fleet are concentrated in such numbers in the ports on the Kola peninsula that Nato's northern command is seriously worried.

It is doubtful now whether northern Norway or Iceland could be defended if full-scale war were waged. Britain's decision to go it alone in the South Atlantic will certainly have increased the danger.

Admiral Fromm did not expressly say so, but his outline of the position allowed no other conclusion.

The Exocet problem, however, was more serious for the Red Fleet than it was for Nato navies, which currently hoped to counter the missile threat by means of the Ram anti-missile system.

The system is being developed by the United States jointly with the Federal Republic of Germany and Denmark.

The Soviet Union, as far as is known, not only has yet to come by any means of defending its units from Exocet missile attacks; it does not have comparable missiles of its own to use in attack either.

Soviet missiles are larger than their Western counterparts, travel slower and do not skim the water beneath the radar shield as the Exocet does.

They keep to an altitude of about 30 metres and can thus be combated by Western anti-missile missiles of various kinds.

In the Baltic, where the Warsaw Pact's largest concentration of warships of limited tonnage is stationed, the Russians could expect if they were to launch an attack to encounter Nato units equipped with over 200 Exocet systems.

This is the main strength of the modernised German flotilla of motor torpedo boats. As a part of Nato the Bundesmarine's operational role is on the pact's northern flank.

Destroyers, frigates, anti-submarine fighters and reconnaissance aircraft are based at Wilhelmshaven on the North Sea, as are the Bundesmarine's submarines.

Their presence enables other Nato countries to allocate naval units for operations outside the North Atlantic and other Nato waters.

This Britain has been doing in its own interest in the South Atlantic. The next time may see naval units heading for the Persian Gulf, in which case they will undeniably be there in the general interest.

Commanding officers of motor torpedo boat flotillas, minelayers, minesweepers and supply units in the Baltic are convinced they are in a position to safeguard sealinks between the North Sea and the Baltic.

Together with the Danish and Norwegian fleets they are capable of securing sea routes between the Atlantic and the Baltic, while collaboration with the Dutch navy should ensure protection from attack via the North Sea.

Amphibious operations by Soviet, Polish and GDR units on the Baltic coast of Schleswig-Holstein in support of an attack on the central front in Germany could be hampered or even brought to a halt by the Bundesmarine's Baltic capacity.

This will definitely be the case when, in the none too remote future, the Bundesmarine is fitted out with Tornado jets.

The arguments put forward by leading naval officers have nothing of the flavour of Kaiser Wilhelm's pride in his naval build-up. Even in lengthy debates there is not a trace of dreadnought tradition.

The Bundesmarine is led by level-headed experts who know what they are talking about when they explain that the Baltic fleet will soon consist only of a new generation of missile-carrying motor torpedo boats.

They are convinced that their main problem will be to reduce reaction times in the event of attack.

On board with speeds of up to 35 knots they explain how command and communications systems are being largely automated by means of data processing.

The sophistication of modern naval management is demonstrated by a logistical capacity that has made it possible, using tenders, ammunition transporters, workshop ships and special craft, to keep units based at sea for months on end.

That is why the navy, including even other ranks, has a feeling of freedom of movement that is not as strongly developed among land forces.

Even in the limited operational con- ditions of the Bundesmarine tech- cians and specialists can be recrui- with a prospect of seeing somethin- the world.

In the United States recruitment long made play with the idea of an venture navy, and many young serving in the navy learn trades they put to good use in civvy street.

That is why the navy is the branch the armed forces that has more offi- and NCOs than other ranks.

The figures are straightforward. Bu- desmarine manpower includes 5,500 ficers, 15,500 NCOs and 17,350 ot- ranks. They are 22 per cent profes- nals, 51 per cent short-service men only 27 per cent conscripts.

They man a service based not on risome ambition but on realisation of own limitations, but one senses the curity derived from knowledge of w- they can do in the given circumstances.

Gerd Ressing

(Rheinischer Merkur/Christ und W- 11 June 1-)

Apel confirms no change in nuclear strategy

Bonn Defence Minister Hans Apel rejects the idea of renouncing first use of nuclear weapons.

He kept his views to himself and looked on while the debate originating in the United States was quick to prompt a response from defence experts of all political parties.

It was only to be expected that the criticism by four US security experts of Nato's flexible response strategy, which is based on the first nuclear strike, would gain even more attention in the Federal Republic of Germany than it did in America.

Dr Apel's arguments for rejecting any idea of renouncing the first nuclear strike are plausible yet disappointing.

As the Western alliance is evidently neither able nor willing to substantially increase its conventional forces as the prerequisite for renunciation of the first strike, there can be no change in the present strategy.

This military logic is proving steadily less satisfactory in the Federal Republic, where many short-range tactical nuclear weapons are based that in the event of hostilities would be more dangerous to us than to the aggressor.

The political parties' experts have shown greater sensitivity to public awareness.

Views may differ on the arguments advanced by Egon Bahr, Jürgen Möllemann and Manfred Wörner on behalf of the SPD, the FDP and the CDU respectively.

But by virtue of detailed proposals on how the nuclear threshold could be raised higher they make it clear that the mere automatic character of the current strategy is no longer entirely trusted.

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, 11 June 1982)

Conscripts will serve a longer term

Bundeswehr conscripts will have serve 18 month instead of 15 at pr- sent, Defence Minister Hans Apel ha- told the Bundestag.

He made the announcement the da- President Reagan arrived in Bonn.

The news was intended to demo- strate to the United States the earnest Germany's defence commitment.

It was also a further reminder of the distinction between the German and American systems. The Bundeswehr is largely a conscript army; the US armed forces are all regulars.

Indirectly Bonn was thus hinting that once this move was made the United States could not expect higher materi- commitments by the Germans in the de- fence sector.

Lengthening the conscription period has come as no surprise.

It will be indispensable because from 1984 the number of conscripts will stea- dily decline as the low birth-rate 60s ba- bies reach fighting age.

From 1987 the number of conscripts available will no longer be enough meet manpower requirements, while the 90s there will be an estimated sho- tage of 100,000 soldiers.

Making conscripts serve longer is n- enough. It merely reduces demand 32,000 men. Other measures will ha- to follow, such as a reduction in number of men exempted and t- conscription of older men, women an- foreign nationals.

And more long-service recruits w- need to be signed on and reservists p- to greater use.

The Defence Ministry is well aw- that only a combination of moves w- be enough to meet the manpower d- mand, and they will all be a burden the individual.

But there can be no avoiding need for them to be taken, unless Federal Republic were prepared substantially reduce the number of s- vice personnel.

That would mean a complete cha- in defence, security and foreign poli- and only a tiny minority of Germ- politicians are prepared to make t- change.

Helmut Bernd-

(Lübecker Nachrichten, 10 June 1-)

■ LABOUR

Theory: push retirement age up, not down



The International Labour Organisation in Geneva has recommended allowing over-65s who want to carry on working to do so.

It is a recommendation that seems to fly in the face of labour market theories. Most people would favour early retirement to create jobs for the unemployed. But there is a case in favour of the ILO recommendation.

If economic yardsticks such as the supply of goods or purchasing power were fixed quantities a case might be made for job sharing of one kind or another.

Production capacity and employment opportunities would be known factors and the point could be argued.

But in practice prices regulate supply and demand. When a manufacturer can no longer sell his products and has to sack staff, what it means is that customers are no longer interested in buying his goods at the price of asking.

It need not mean there is no demand for the product. It would merely have to be marked down to find customers.

So costs, a crucial factor in determining whether a product is competitive, decide whether a company flourishes and how many people it can employ.

By the same token, the demand for jobs (in the sense of the number of jobs available) declines when labour on offer becomes too expensive.

Before we price ourselves out of the market we must cut costs, and this cannot be achieved by reallocating jobs to the young at the expense of the old.

This saves the company not a penny. It does not stand to grow more competitive by sending an experienced skilled worker into early retirement and replacing him or her with someone else.

This will certainly not be the case as long as all that is known about the replacement is that he is younger, out of work and available.

Yet many are in favour of some kind of job redistribution because the economy is so weak that it cannot be long before there is a drastic increase in unemployment.

Growth rates of between four and five per cent are needed if full employment is to be restored by the end of the decade, but the best that seems likely is an annual average of two per cent.

Several forecasts suggest that this could mean nearly four million Germans out of work by the end of 1989.

So Bonn is going to have to do something to prevent the emergence of two nations, the employed and the unemployed, and there is growing pressure for government intervention, as opposed to allowing market forces to bring about change.

This is to forget that the spiralling costs that were to blame for the situation in the first place could be offset by more work.

If everyone were to work more for the same pay, productivity would increase, profits too. They could be reinvested, generating fresh orders and new jobs. Work could generate more jobs.

But the process cannot be triggered indiscriminately. Sins of the past, such as expecting too much on a plate, will for some time continue to have after-effects.

Even so, the interplay of costs and profits and costs and jobs shows how ill-suited a redistribution of existing jobs is to eliminate the causes of underemployment.

If anything, it could be expected to aggravate the situation. If the burden had to be borne by society as a whole, everyone would be increasingly obliged to take in their belts a notch or two.

The consequence would almost certainly appear to be the loss of even more jobs.

Besides, early retirement would virtually bankrupt the pension scheme, which for years has been on the brink of failing to make ends meet.

Since 1957 the pensions system has been based on a contract between the generations, with pensions being paid from the contributions of people in employment.

Those who retired early would reduce still further the declining band of contributors and artificially increase the number of pensioners.

Higher contributions would be the only way to make ends meet. If retirement were to be at 60 instead of 65, social security contributions would have to be increased by 50 per cent.

So early retirement, even though it has been widely debated as a possible solution to the problem of unemployment, will be seen on closer scrutiny to have more disadvantages than advantages.

Once early retirement is introduced, any further progress in this sector can be ruled out.

People may still attach greater importance to leisure than to job commitments, but there are already signs that they are less keen on more spare time when it means less pay.

In the past the two have been combined. People have worked less and still had more money in their pockets. But those days are over, or so it would seem.

The ILO proposal to allow older workers who want to do so to work longer is not really practicable.

The range and number of jobs suitable for older people would first need to be increased substantially, and few firms, if any, have even made a start in this direction.

But the proposal bears thinking about in view of future trends that are overshadowed by current problems. In the 90s demographers expect a dramatic change in the situation.

As a result of the decline in birth rates due to the advent of the Pill and the growing number of old people there will be a shortage of people of working age that knocks all previous labour shortages into a cocked hat.

Idea for 1990s

So in the 90s it might well make sense to increase either the number of working hours per week or the length of people's working lives.

But until then we will have to deal with entirely different problems that are unlikely to be solved by administrative measures such as lowering retirement age.

It is to the ILO's credit to have drawn attention to the consequences, and the proposal itself is not so much the point. Anyone who reaches the age of 65 in reasonable health will probably be keen to enjoy a well-deserved retirement.

Yet there may be some who would sooner carry on working in some way or another, and they ought not to be prohibited from doing so if that is what they want.

Norbert Sturm

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, 12 June 1982)

Why they don't want to take holidays

The Japanese are reputed among German company executives to be almost mediaeval in their loyalty to their employer.

Japanese sociologists say that most Japanese are reluctant to take their annual holiday.

They feel it is a privilege and tend to regard it as a reserve in which to recover from illness or celebrate family occasions for which extra leave is usually granted in Europe.

There is a growing tendency by Germans to go without holidays too. Does that make them good employees?

It depends on your point of view. Why don't people want to take holidays?

The travel trade suggests people are short of money. But that cannot be the main reason, otherwise people would merely stay at home.

But 10.6 million people out of a working population of about 27 million choose to keep working instead. Most do for fear of being given the sack.

In an era of high unemployment the fear of redundancy is real, especially among less qualified staff with fewer skills.

Not taking holidays is not in the interest of social progress or workers' health. It is also not exactly a gesture of solidarity with the unemployed.

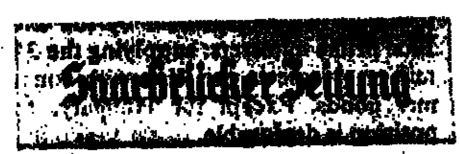
Workers who don't take their annual holidays save companies the trouble and expense of hiring extra staff.

The current ruling is that holidays not taken by the end of the following March are forfeited. It has been suggested that people should be required by law to take their holidays.

This might reduce the number of people out of work but it would be a strange reversal of the general trend in labour and social legislation!

(Nürnberger Nachrichten, 8 June 1982)

The old should be allowed to work on, says psychologist



Plans for early retirement to reduce unemployment should be abandoned, says Ursula Lehr, head of the department of psychology at Bonn University.

She feels they would be a crime against most older people for whom work is part of the spice of life.

Professor Lehr draws this conclusion from a long-term probe into ageing in which 20 older people were kept under observation over a period of 17 years.

The data of people who have survived to old age in fine physical and mental health clearly show that an active life is likely to be a long one.

Genetic factors, education, intelligence, personality and eating habits are contributory aspects, but activity definitely tends to prolong life.

"Solitude and boredom are deadly," she says. "Those who stay physically and mentally active, plan for the future, maintain contacts and have a purpose in life live longer.

"In old age work is a source of well-being. Consideration ought to be given to ways and means of enabling people to work beyond the present retirement age of 65. Many people could live longer if they were able to work longer."

Many pensioners polled as part of the survey said they still felt capable of holding down a job but were no longer allowed to.

It was wrong to say that work generally led to wear and tear on people. It was not primarily felt to be unpleasant. People didn't just work for the money. It also enabled them to get to know others.

In the debate on early retirement many surveys are said to have found that working people relish the prospect of retiring.

They will then at long last be able to get a good night's sleep, to travel and to find time for their hobbies.

But once they have retired they take a different view, Professor Lehr says. The opportunity of sleeping longer soon loses its charms.

Many pensioners are desperately keen to find a job to keep themselves busy. The deluge of applications to join the senior peace corps planned in Bonn is typical, she claims.

Working beyond retirement age must be voluntary, of course. There are people for whom early retirement would be good because they are worn out by heavy manual labour or working shifts.

But most people would rather carry on working, so the most sensible solution could be a gradual transition to retirement, possibly beginning with a six-hour day or four-day week for older workers.

Professor Lehr says early retirement does not make economic sense either. The experience of older people, who tend to be particularly responsible and hard-working, would be allowed to go to waste.

(Saarbrücker Zeitung, 8 June 1982)

■ TRADE

After Versailles, a matter of interpretation



Helmut Schmidt had a rough time during the Versailles Economic Summit of the seven leading Western industrial nations.

The election in Hamburg, his home city, could well have decided his own political destiny; and at the summit the trump cards were held by people who favour a tougher and better coordinated trade policy towards the Soviet Union. Such a policy runs counter to German interests.

The Federal Republic of Germany is the only major Western industrial nation bordering directly on the Soviet Bloc. It has to live with that fact.

In its bid to find a middle-of-the-road approach, the Federal Republic seeks civilised relations with the Soviet empire.

For the United States, thre position is different. The Americans know that much in the Soviet Bloc has only been made possible through Western credits. Repayment of these are by no means ensured, either, because the East Bloc owes so much to the West.

So the Americans would like to see East-West deals reduced to strictly enforced commercially feasible proportions.

This is the formula agreed on by the seven at Versailles. But it is formula open to interpretation by both Americans and Germans and one which can easily enough be bent to suit national interests.

This was clearly demonstrated in the remarks on the European-Soviet natural gas deal on the one hand and American grain shipments to the Soviet Union on the other.

President Reagan found it easy enough to defend his country's grain deals in terms of this formula: the Soviets have to pay cash.

The gas-pipeline deal, on the other hand, the Americans complain, is a credit transaction that increases the East Bloc's debt to the West and reduces its creditworthiness.

What it all boils down to is that the USA would like to embark on a mild trade war with the Soviet Union as was customary before the "invention" of free trade in the 18th century.

According to the mercantilistic precepts of that era, any deal that strengthened the partner was bad while those deals that weakened him — or at least made him dependent — were good.

Consequently, food shipments for cash that deplete the gold and foreign exchange reserves of the Soviet Union are good, while technology transfer on credit is bad.

These transfers of technology strengthen the Soviet Bloc without making it pay much in return.

As the Americans see it, the credits in connection with such deals can be repaid through the goods produced by this technology.

Seen in a mercantilistic light, this is sound logic which the Americans see as being clearly demonstrated by the gas-pipeline deal: Europe supplies the Soviets with the equipment needed to develop its Siberian gasfield and the Soviet Union pays for it by shipping gas.

Such a deal, which makes sense if concluded between equal partners, is tolerable for the Europeans because it eases neighbourly relations with an alien system.

The Americans deplore it because it favours the enemy.

There can be no doubt that both sides are right from their own vantage point.

The Versailles compromise formula is flexible enough to only just permit the gas deal because the financing of the credit is still feasible. But it precludes a second deal of similar size between Europe and the East Bloc, thus restricting the policy of active East-West trade.

The question as to how East-West trade can be expanded still further remains. The two systems are simply too different to permit extensive partnership relations.

One prerequisite for an active East-West trade would be a more consumer-oriented Soviet policy at home and a more attractive range of goods for export to the West. But the Soviet Union has little to offer other than raw materials.

Seen in this light, even the Federal Republic of Germany can live with the Versailles formula. *Bernd Hansen*

(Deutsches Allgemeines Sonntagsblatt, 13 June 1982)

Comecon delegate calls for East bloc economic change

A Hungarian delegate to the 36th Comecon conference in Budapest has called for economic reforms throughout the East Bloc.

Josef Bognar, president of the Hungarian Institute for the World Economy, said the East Bloc should be more flexible and open-minded about world trade.

He wanted more harmonious ties between individual East Bloc economies and more attention paid to specific problems in each country.

The agenda included not only the customary periodic cordination of trade and production plans within the organisation but also an analysis of the global economic situation and its effects on Comecon.

One topic was how to reduce the enormous debt to the West of individual Comecon members.

Poland and Rumania are now barely in a position to meet the repayment deadlines on their short and medium-term loans of almost US$50bn.

In view of this amount, the US$80bn overall debt assumed for Comecon seems too low.

For the first time in Comecon's history, the conference also saw an official exchange of views on far-reaching reforms in the organisation's foreign trade and monetary policy.

The position of some of the member countries now seems to make reforms that have been delayed for so long mandatory. New moves for a development strategy that would improve Comecon's position on international markets are overdue.

Certain statements by leading East Bloc economists seem to indicate that these reforms will include mnetary measures and more attention to market forces.

Even Soviet economists seized upon some some of the reform demands voiced in Budapest.

Another Hungarian demand was that Comecon should export more to the non-rouble area in a bid to keep pace with the West's technological progress.

It is obvious that the main reason for

DER TAGESSPIEGEL

these Hungarian proposals was to ensure Hungary's own commercial freedoms and that country's high economic standard. More than half of Hungary's trade is now with the West.

Leading Soviet economist Professor Oleg Bogomolov was more cautious. He favoured more trade with the West but he wanted it to include more finished products.

He accused the West of deliberately exporting its own economic woes through its credit policies.

Understandably, Bogomolov failed to mention that it is the non-profitability of planned economies that has made Western credits too expensive for Comecon countries. He also failed to mention the unrealistic prices and the trade and monetary monopoly that the individual Comecon countries maintain.

He called for intensified division of labour, better coordination of the five-year plans, regulation of supply and demand via rices and more scope of decision for the individual plants.

The Hungarian and Yugoslav models were clearly in evidence.

There was another tricky question that had to be dealt with by the East Bloc prime ministers: supplying the 350 million people in the Bloc with consumer goods. Except for Hungary, the position is deplorable.

After Poland and Rumania, it is now the Soviet Union itself that is threatened with a collapse of the supply system (following three poor harvests in a row).

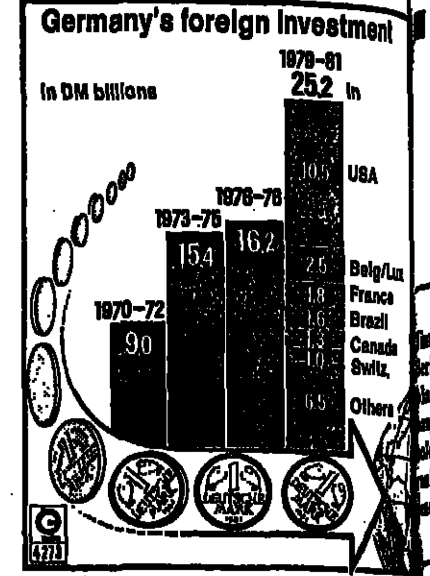
As a result, the objective was to achieve a better distribution of available supplies within Comecon — which is somewhat at odds with the wishes of those Comecon nations that depend on their sales of high quality food and consumer goods for their foreign exchange.

There is no way of preventing a further deterioration of the suply position without grain imports from America.

"The fact that the beginning of the conference was marked by Hungary's increasing prices for super, diesel and heating oil by 15 per cent clearly shows the problems confronting Comecon."

Gustav Chalupa

(Der Tagesspiegel, 9 June 1982)



The successes behind the headlines

The Europeans and the Americans have for months been engaged in a fierce dispute over US interest rates and the Siberian gas deal with the Soviets.

The headlines are dominated by accusations of protectionism and the growing dispute over trade in steel and agricultural products.

The decisions of the International Trade Commission (America's authority watching over imports) promote the impression that German-American foreign trade relations are now governed by mutual criticism and general sour grapes.

It is worth taking a look behind journalistic facades.

German direct investments in the United States have risen from DM500m to DM15bn in the past 12 years. At least 450 German companies now produce their goods in America.

Some 2,000 companies are now members of the German-American Chamber of Commerce. Half of them are subsidiaries of German firms; and the number of German companies in America has doubled in the past five years.

Despite all the negative reports today, the German business community has greatly contributed towards a positive balance sheet of German-American relations.

It is true that potential investors in the United States have been frightened off by the see-sawing economic and fiscal policy of the US administration.

But even so, the DM3.4bn German investment in America during the Carter administration showed no major change in the first year of Reaganomics.

Naturally, the failures of German investors made more headlines than their successes. And the failures should not always be blamed on others.

In some cases they are due to unfamiliarity with the market and the technological standards in the United States and in others to wrong management decisions.

The formerly flourishing exchange of trainees and executives between the United States and Germany is flagging.

The fact that various circles in Bonn warn of a growing island mentality on both sides of the Atlantic should be an added reason for the German business community to go beyond riveting its worried sights on anti-American demonstrations in Bonn.

Gerd Janssen

(Handelsblatt, 10 June 1982)

■ BUSINESS

High Noon again for a troubled AEG

Time is running short for ailing industrial giant AEG-Telefunken, of Frankfurt and Berlin. The group is about DM5bn in the red and needs at least DM3bn help. Managing director Heinz Dürr has put together a plan to salvage the company that will need to be backed jointly by Bonn, the Länder, the banks, the staff, shareholders, bondholders and an industrial partner. If only one of these groups breaks ranks this third and possibly final rescue bid for AEG could fail, and doubts have already been raised about Herr Dürr's package.

The latest AEG rescue bid raises at least a point of order and arguably one of fair play. Plans to rejig the group so it can hope to run at a profit will need a shot in the arm from the state.

The last rescue bid, based on the private enterprise so highly rated by its backers, companies and bankers led by Dresdner Bank's Hans Friderichs, was a failure.

Yet there is no point in standing on principle when over 100,000 jobs are in jeopardy. If the state can help, it should. But can it? That is the question.

What justification can there be for Bonn standing surety for a DM1bn loan to AEG-Telefunken, and the *Länder* bailing out individual AEG works, if Bauknecht are not to be helped too?

Bauknecht also manufacture consumer durables such as refrigerators and washing machines and employ a payroll of 12,000. The company has called in the receivers.

But what about the Bauknecht workers? Do they have any less right than AEG workers to having their jobs shored up by an injection of government cash?

Is the state entitled to take sides in the market and if it is, what are its chances of success? The consumer durables market is in the doldrums for two reasons.

Surplus capacity is due in part to the market for refrigerators and washing machines having largely been saturated. Most households already have them.

The other main contributory factor is the state of economy. Two years of high unemployment and a decline in purchasing power in real terms could hardly fail to make their mark.

A new washing machine can easily cost the average family half a month's take-home pay.

The industry was banking on energy-saving products proving a profitable new market, but they haven't, especially as oil prices have declined.

This was certainly a major reason why Bauknecht went to the wall. The management invested heavily in electric storage heaters, but the sales boom was short-lived.

Surplus capacity is due not only to sales stagnating but also to new production methods. The only manufacturer who runs at a profit nowadays is the one who has opted for automation.

Goods are manufactured in increasingly long runs by fewer and fewer workers. Failure to jump on this bandwagon has plunged AEG, the largest group in the trade, into the red.

Sins of the 60s and 70s are being visited on the 80s. AEG took over one company after another to make sure of being the No. 1.

Take-over bids were staged for Küppersbusch, Neff, Zanker, BBC and Linde. At one stage the group manufactured washing machines, refrigerators, freezers and stoves at 17 factories.

Bosch and Siemens, AEG's major domestic competitors, were quicker to sense the shape of things to come and agreed in 1967 to join forces in manufacturing household goods.

They realised that the only survivors in the market would be the manufacturers who turned out long runs profitably, relying on a high degree of automation.

Bauknecht were also tempted to plunge headlong into growth. They did so too fast and with too little regard for financial safety. That brought them into their present predicament, which could be curtains.

Yet Bauknecht's position in respect of production and the market is far from bad. Neither is AEG's. But they both lack the cash to last the distance.

Ought Baden-Württemberg to bail out Bauknecht to save 1,000 jobs each in Schorndorf and Calw now that AEG have decided to shut down the former Zanker works in Tübingen?

Ought Bavaria to invest DM300m in AEG's household goods division in Nuremberg, as AEG sincerely hope it will? Baden-Württemberg und Bavaria would end up competing for the market in an industry still bedevilled by surplus capacity.

Capacity would still be surplus to requirements. Competition would continue, with the winner taking all and the loser being elbowed out of the market.

How can profits be made in such a situation and who is to be the loser? Must it be Miele, a family firm that is still running at a profit? Is it to be Bosch or Siemens?

AEG, the penniless giant, has a 20-per-cent share of the market but is operating at a loss.

The management has decided to shut down next year its Zanker division in Tübingen and Küppersbusch in Gelsenkirchen. It has no choice.

In the first stage of the bid to streamline the group and get it out of the red five of the 17 consumer durables factories were shut down.

The remaining dozen still employ 19,500 people who between them account for over DM3bn in turnover, and when Tübingen and Gelsenkirchen shut down there will still be ten.

The group cannot afford to keep units going that manufacture virtually the same products and compete with each other for the market.

Neither can the state, especially as its intervention could bring other companies into difficulties that have so far managed to trade successfully under their own steam.

Even so, AEG-Telefunken is bleeding to death, figuratively speaking, because of the burden of interest payments on cash it had to borrow because it lacked resources of its own.

Managing director Heinz Dürr says the bid will need backing from industry, banks and insurance companies, the staff, Bonn and the *Länder*. But AEG can be rescued and is worth rescuing.

Management, the unions and the state he says, have to join forces nowadays to keep industries going that must be kept going to retain the technology and know-how.

There is no other line of defence against the 'Japanese attack,' he says, and he may well be right.

The collapse of AEG would certainly shake the German economy, but the rescue bid has consequences for an economic and social system that is still felt (and feels itself) to be market-orientated. They are consequences the significance of which many politicians and businessmen are not even prepared to admit to themselves. *Georg Heller*

(Deutsches Allgemeines Sonntagsblatt, 13 June 1982)

Mannesmann pushes profit through its pipelines

Mannesmann are doing well, not only in pipes but also in mechanical engineering and power station construction, and the current upturn comes after substantial gains last year.

In 1981 turnover increased by 18 per cent to DM15.4bn, with pipes continuing to account for the lion's share of the increase.

Despite diversification in recent years pipes made up 41 per cent of consolidated turnover.

The group made a profit on its commercial operations. It also made one on pipes, which are in the red in 1980. Restructuring in the group's steel and pipe works has paid dividends.

In 1981 the pipes division increased output by 14 and turnover by 29 per cent. Three-and-a-half million tonnes of pipes were manufactured, including three million tonnes at home, and the pipes boom continues.

But all divisions of the group have played their part in Mannesmann's profits. Hartmann & Braun were back in the black, whereas new acquisition Kienzle Apparatebau GmbH was DM30m in the red.

Kienzle is expected by Mannesmann managing director Egon Overbeck to be working at a profit again by the end of 1984.

A remarkable feature of trading in 1981 was the further increase in foreign business to 68 per cent.

The annual surplus was DM90m up at DM272m, of which DM116m were registered as profits. A DM6 dividend will be paid for 1981, as against DM5.50 in recent years.

In July basic capital is to be increased by a nominal DM124m to a total DM1,116m.

Investments last year reached a record DM668m, including DM500m at home, of which the lion's share was ploughed into pipes and steelworks.

Between 1982 and 1985 Mannesmann plans to invest DM750m a year in plant and equipment.

Norbert Welter

(Rheinischer Merkur/Christ und Welt, 11 June 1982)

US steel levies tolerable — Lambsdorff

DIE WELT

American levies on steel imports from the EEC, although undesirable in principle, are tolerable, says Bonn Economic Affairs Minister Count Lambsdorff.

Most German steelmakers are not affected because they don't rely on government subsidies, which is the accusation levelled by US steelmakers at the Europeans.

The US Department of Commerce has decided to penalise only Röchling-Burbach, who export next to no steel to America anyway, and Peine-Salzgitter.

These two German steelmakers are said to be subsidised by 8.6 and 3.2 per cent respectively.

Both are for the most part given regional aid and Count Lambsdorff hopes the US authorities will dispense with levies in their case.

The Department of Commerce estimates that most German steelmakers are subsidised less than one per cent. The figure for British steel is 40 per cent.

For French and Belgian steel the estimate varies between 20 and 30 per cent. For Italian steel it is 18 per cent. So Count Lambsdorff feels it is time subsidies were reduced in the Common Market.

He was happy that Washington shared the German view that grants to promote the use of coke to fire furnaces were not subsidies to the steel industry.

He was opposed to self-restraint agreements by exporters as a means of settling the conflict. He advised companies hit to refer the levy to Gatt.

US steel importers, including US subsidiaries of German steelmakers, are now required to deposit cash with the customs authorities to offset the subsidies, on average about $300 a ton.

The American Institute for Imported Steel expects many kinds of foreign steel to be ousted from the US market. The penalties are the highest to be imposed by the United States on steel imports for years.

The institute has already warned that US steelmakers would take the opportunity provided by the import barriers to increase their prices.

The increase, it claims, will cost American consumers $5bn a year.

By US law the levies come finally into force once judgment is passed by the Department of Commerce and the International Trade Commission in Washington.

That will be on 24 August and 8 October respectively.

Many American experts are wondering what all the fuss is about. US steel consumption this year will probably total 94.8m tons, of which not even five per cent is imported from EEC countries.

Besides, in April shipments from Western Europe were 319,000 tons, or 43.9 per cent down on April 1981.

With levies expected, orders of European steel have already plummeted, so a further decline can be expected.

US steelmakers are working at below 50 per cent capacity and 106,000 steelworkers are unemployed.

(Die Welt, 14 June 1982)



■ PERSPECTIVE

East bloc access to technology a cause for American concern

President Reagan wants to curb the export of technology to East Bloc countries. He first suggested stricter Cocom regulations at the Western economic summit in Ottawa last year.

Cocom is the coordinating committee for East-West trade. It is based in Paris.

By importing Western technology the Soviet Union and its satellites can accelerate the pace of their arms build-up, bridge gaps in industrial production and save heavily on research and development.

The East Bloc gains access to crucial sectors of advanced Western technology partly via normal commercial channels and partly in a more roundabout manner.

A characteristic feature is the purchase of Western computers and microelectronic semi-finished products that are the heart and mind of modern military technology.

Strenuous efforts are naturally made in the East Bloc countries themselves to develop electronic components and computers. A 1981 Pentagon survey of Soviet armament reported impressive progress.

Electronic capacity has been greatly extended in the East Bloc, but there are still bottlenecks, especially in software.

The East also lags behind in the finer points of and progress in further development of high-capacity miniaturised components.

*The West owes its lead in micropro*cessors and other miniaturised and integrated circuit units printed on tiny silicon chips not only to US space research but also to a powerful burst of industrial innovation in the civil sector.

The East Bloc is trying, by hook or by crook, to gain access to what it lacks. Where microelectronics cannot be bought directly it is imported via third countries, especially Turkey, it is understood.

Where technological know-how is not for sale the East Bloc does not necessarily have to resort to espionage. The West is brimful of technology. Specialised literature and laboratory reports are freely accessible. Access can also be gained to data banks.

So it is hardly surprising that the Soviet Union now lags behind the West in electronic development by only two to five years, as against an estimated 10 to 12 years in the 1965 Pentagon report.

Microelectronic components and computers, the 1981 survey says, have been reconstructed by any means available. The Pentagon says the Soviet Union has been given a veritable technology transfusion.

Defence Secretary Weinberger is continually producing evidence to support his claim that Soviet military electronics is largely American in origin.

This is said to apply in equal measure to weapons with automatic target-finders, to ballistic missiles and to command and control instrumentation.

The Soviet computer range known as the Ryad series is reported to use the same software and peripherals as the IBM 360 and 370.

Development aid of this kind, unwittingly given by the capitalist system, has lastingly benefited the GDR, which has relied on internationally acknowledged management consultants and staff instructors in building up its computer industry.

It has been able to use to a large extent the proven research findings of leading US manufacturers of microchips, says the All-German Research Unit, West Berlin.

"Buying Western technology," it writes in a report, "may be expensive but as a rule it seldom entails any great difficulty."

The West has heightened the risk it runs by marketing advanced technology such as electronics so generously.

There is a growing realisation that the traffic from West to East in sensitive military and industrial material cannot continue as it has been doing.

But views differ on how and to what extent the transfer of technology is to be curbed.

President Reagan says the West must ensure on a broad front that Western technology, especially electronics, is protected and preserved.

Communist bids to gain access to it must draw a blank.

Bonn has long showed signs of agreeing but is not keen to regulate technology transfer as comprehensively as Washington would like.

The German government is not in favour of fresh control and embargo procedures. As far as is needed for reasons of security, Bonn says, strategic exports must be handled better and more sensibly within the existing Cocom framework.

Cocom is the Coordinating Committee for East-West Trade, based in Paris. If its work were done more sensibly and more effectively much, it is said, could be accomplished.

But Cocom is slow and cumbersome. There is not enough political elan to make more out of the system.

So President Reagan's efforts have yet to be given effective backing. In January, for instance, the US government convened a special session of the coordinating committee.

There are 15 member-countries, all the Nato countries except Iceland, plus Japan. In Bonn and other Cocom capitals the importance of the gathering was played down afterwards.

Yet it was the first time in 25 years that Cocom, which has existed for over three decades, had debated basic issues of future technology exports.

More particularly, as Washington emphasised, it was the first time in a quarter of a century that Cocom had discussed the subject at a high-ranking level.

It was noted afterwards, off the record of course, that the Cocom countries had grown even more clearly aware of the problems presented by technology transfer.

But the Cocom system is cumbersome. Voting is taken item by item on whether an export order is of strategic importance to the East Bloc and whether export permission should be granted or not.

Products that are Cocom-listed as sensitive are not subject to an explicit export ban, but in a special permit procedure an export embargo can be imposed.

Even the most minute changes to the embargo list can only be made by unanimous decision of the 15 Cocom countries, so a system of this kind is bound to have its loopholes, and experience has shown that they can be sizable.

It is high time the process was consolidated and implemented more consistently, and this calls for a political decision by the governments concerned.

Government agencies responsible for issuing export permits in member-countries must enforce Cocom regulations with equal earnest in processing applications to export technology to communist countries.

When sensitive technology is exported to countries outside the East Bloc care must be taken to ensure that it does not end up in the East.

Whenever there is the slightest suspicion that technical equipment, especially with electronic controls, that has been ordered by a communist country for commercial use might be put to military use, the order should be cancelled.

Electronic components that are of such crucial importance in weapons technology cannot be allowed to continue slipping through the net as they have done in the past.

Klaus Broichhausen

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 4 June 1982)

Arms export guidelines under heavy fire

A Social Democrat MP has accused the government of having thrown open the door for indiscriminate arms exports.

Norbert Gansel said the arms lobby had won the day on the government's new guidelines for arms exports.

He said the government had breached both Basic Law — the 1949 Bonn Constitution — and the Arms Control Act.

The guidelines have been accepted by most SPD MPs, but Gansel was one of several critics. During several hours debate by the parliamentary party he tried unsuccessfully to introduce several amendments.

He called for tougher restrictions and clarification of the guidelines.

"Anyone who claims the new guidelines are restrictive," he complained, "either fails to appreciate the problem or is laying himself open to suspicions of befogging the issue."

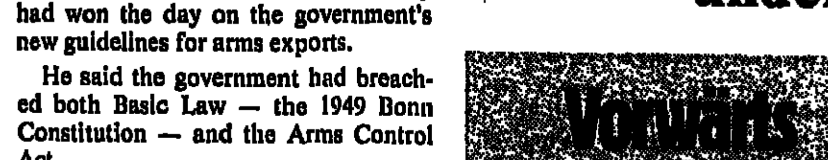
This criticism was counted mainly by Chancellor Schmidt and Justice Minister Jürgen Schmude.

"In future," said the Chancellor, "there will be much tougher restrictions on arms exports." "The restrictive overall approach is quite clear," said Herr Schmude.

Herr Gansel and the SPD critics were particularly mistrustful of a provision that allowed for the export of arms in special circumstances.

These circumstances were if "by virtue of special political considerations exceptions of a general nature are made or, in specific instances, vital interests of the Federal Republic of Germany warrant an exception being made."

Helmut Schmidt did not agree that





this provision threw the door wide open for arms exports to Third World countries. He said it referred only to friendly neutral states.

Differences of opinion also arose on arms manufactured jointly with other countries. Herr Gansel called for Bonn to insist on the right to veto sales to a given country.

The Chancellor felt this was unrealistic. "The idea of insisting on a veto right is," he said, "wishful thinking."

Herr Gansel and the critics claim the guidelines contradict resolutions passed at the Munich SPD conference.

The Social Democrats had then called on the government to limit arms exports strictly to member-countries of the Atlantic alliance and comparable democratic states.

Egon Bahr, chairman of the arms exports working party in the Bundestag SPD, said he well understood the mistrust felt by many MPs.

At the same time he made it clear that in comparison with their predecessors the new arms export guidelines were far more restrictive.

He criticised, but did not name, Cabinet members who had sought to have restrictions on arms exports eased. *Vorwärts* understands that Economic Affairs Minister Lambsdorff, FDP, was strongly in favour of a relaxation.

But his view was shared neither by the Chancellor, who is a Social Democrat, nor by Foreign Minister Genscher, the FDP leader.

Herr Bahr's suggestion of first seeing how the new guidelines worked in practice, then reviewing them in six months' time was accepted by the parliamentary party.

Time alone would tell whether they were applied as restrictively as the SPD would like.

"If, after the trial period, they are found not to have been satisfactory," he continued, "the parliamentary party will have to decide either to take up the subject again or to seek to amend the legal provisions."

The SPD parliamentary party then called on its members of the Federal Security Council, Herbert Wehner and Egon Bahr, to advocate strongly a restrictive approach on arms exports.

Lothar Löffler, vice-chairman of the parliamentary party, had this to say after several hours of debate:

"The debate has reaffirmed our thorough discussion and the resolve of the Federal government to adopt a restrictive approach.

"That is why doubts as the possibility of collaboration with the Federal government, on the basis of trust, in arms export control are without foundation."

Gode Japs

(Vorwärts, 3 June 1982)

THE ENVIRONMENT

'Waste not, want not' becomes 'waste it because it's not wanted'

Every few weeks there is a collection of waste paper in a small town in Hesse. People regularly make up parcels of old newspapers for recycling.

But they are wasting their time. The bundles they carefully tie up in string are not sold to a paper factory; they are quietly driven to the municipal rubbish dump.

"We daren't tell anyone," says the manager of the refuse disposal department, "they would be disappointed. But we can't find any buyers of waste paper nowadays."

A compost installation a few miles down the road has also run into problems people would prefer not to discuss.

When it was built politicians and environmentalists alike were enthusiastic about the opportunity of converting garbage into compost and earning money at the same time.

The manager of the compost works now has to cart his product to the wine-growers of the Moselle. No-one nearer home will have it, and they will only take it free of charge.

Politicians and environmentalists still enthusiastically proclaim that trash is both money and raw materials to be recycled.

This optimism is no longer shared by the men responsible for handling and disposing of household waste for the local authorities.

Bonn plans to make recycling mandatory in the Refuse Disposal Bill it expects to submit to the Bundestag later this year, but the men on the spot don't think that will make much difference.

Local authority and industrial garbage disposers are to be required to develop new recycling concepts and to consider offers to recycle trash made by private companies.

Experts are convinced this requirement will fail to speed the pace of recycling any further.

New methods of recycling waste are continually invented. A small firm in Düsseldorf, for instance, has devised, with a government grant, a method of making flower pots out of old cables.

A Tübingen University professor has succeeded in converting sewage sludge into heating oil in laboratory conditions. So have scientists in Britain and Italy.

Others even claim to have recycled oil and protein from used car tyres, but it will be five to ten years before either process will be feasible on a commercial scale.

Besides, as Professor Karl Thomé-Kozmiensky of the Technical University, West Berlin, puts it:

"All such processes look better the further away they are from being put into practice. Politicians and the Press are unfair to them because they sing their praises too soon."

"Then they are disappointed when the idea proves impracticable or uneconomic."

Even officials at the Environmental Protection Agency, West Berlin, are disappointed with results so far of the uses to which recycled domestic garbage can be put.

They had high hopes about the idea of reclaiming glass, plastic, rubber, metal, paper and organic materials from household waste.

DIE ZEIT

There were even plans to recycle half the country's domestic garbage by the end of the decade, and that would have been roughly 14 million tonnes a year.

The aim was to reduce Germany's dependence on imported raw materials. But, as one official admits: "For two or three years we have realised it just isn't working the way we thought it would."

The technology is not the main problem. The difficulty is selling the recycled raw material, which can seldom compete with the original product for quality.

The cost of recycling is higher than initially estimated in most cases too, but politicians are so keen that they seem to overlook such details.

"In the early 70s," says Hans Langer, "any local authority that had plans to recycle waste was sure of government grants."

"The engineers started inventing ways of doing it but no-one ever bothered to go into costs or marketing. Why should they? No-one had to submit a statement of accounts."

That was why many local politicians were so keen about garbage composting. It sounded wonderful and went down well with voters and ecological groups.

But as long as local authorities are unable to sell the compost, the cost of refuse disposal by this technique will be between DM60 and DM150 per tonne, or roughly twice as much as incineration or three times as much as dumping.

Since refuse disposal charges then have to be increased, householders soon lose enthusiasm about progress of this kind.

So it is hardly surprising no mention is made any more of the 50 to 60 garbage composting installations that were to have been built all over the country.

At present there are 16, and they process about three per cent of German household garbage. There probably won't be any more for a while, says Bernd Wolbeck of the Bonn Interior Ministry.

The Bonn government has fallen well short of its waste paper recycling targets too. It had hoped about half the country's 10m tonnes of waste paper could be recycled.

This was an admirable target, given that about 15 trees are felled to make a tonne of paper.

But the uses to which waste paper can be put in the wrapping paper and cardboard industry have gradually been exhausted, so the idea was to expand the market for grey-tinted recycled paper.

Recycled paper costs more than white and the uses to which it can be put are limited. Not even the Bonn Ministries, which are supposed to use only recycled paper, always do so.

So the recycling of waste paper is actually on the decline and only about 42 per cent is currently reused. Besides, most comes from the paper and packaging industry, not from domestic consumers.

Industrial waste paper is of better quality and more uniform in quality too, making it easier to process.

Householders pile up five million tonnes of waste paper by the roadside every year, but only about two per cent is actually recycled.

There is no hope of most of this waste paper ever being reused by the paper industry, even state secretary Günter Hartkopf of the Bonn Interior Ministry admits.

The only meaningful use to which it can be put in any quantity, he says, is in generating energy or other alternative uses.

And there is only one such alternative use that has so far resulted in a competitive product, the manufacture of flower pots from waste paper.

These pots can be potted in the garden together with their contents. The plants will grow. The paper will rot without presenting the slightest ecological problem.

Recycling glass is not such a sorry tale. Glass manufacturers have backed recycling strongly, and with costly advertising campaigns.

They have even hired pop stars such as Chris Andrews and Tony Sheridan to sing the praises of recycling glass in shopping centres.

Colourful containers have been sited in towns all over the country by glass manufacturers for reclaiming old bottles, and manufacturers have given the government an undertaking to buy back a certain quantity of old glass every year.

In 1974 they were recycling 150,000 tonnes or so of old bottles a year. Last year it was three times as much. By 1985 the amount is scheduled to amount to 1.2 m tonnes, or about two thirds of the country's glass waste.

But this industrial enthusiasm has anything but altruistic motives. Energy prices are so high that they stand to gain from using an admixture of old glass.

They have an even more telling motive. Interior Minister Gerhart Baum is continually threatening to ban non-returnable bottles. This would hit turnover hard.

So glass manufacturers readily accept *the lessor evil of recycling waste so as to appease Herr Baum, who is keen on en*vironmental protection, and dissuade him from taking more effective measures.

The success rates in recycling other kinds of waste vary. The only 100-per-cent success story is from the scrap-yards where two million old cars are cannibalised and scrapped every year.

The recycling quota for waste iron is 25 per cent, for used tyres that are burnt in cement works 80 per cent and for camera batteries that dealers have taken back since 1980 a reasonable 40 per cent.

But the other 60 per cent are still thrown into dustbins even though they contain highly toxic waste.

It is not worthwhile separating plastic waste from household garbage. The various materials vary too much and would need to be re-sorted. That costs too much.

Since 1975 the Bonn government has invested over DM250m in developing and perfecting recycling techniques, but no matter how sophisticated the sorting and processing are, they are no use if the recycled product cannot compete in the market.

The government could lead the way as a consumer, says Benno Risch, an EEC environment expert. "The public sector could spend much more money on environmentally sound products in all Comon Market countries."

The EEC Council of Ministers has officially advised member-governments to use recycled paper for all official forms and school books.

Environment experts are hoping Brussels will make further recommendations, such as deposit-only bottles for public service canteens, garbage compost for public parks and so on.

But it hasn't yet. *Irene Mayer-List*

(Die Zeit, 11 June 1982)

Makers agree to step up use of re-usable containers

Beverage manufacturers and the packaging industry have agreed to make greater use of reusable containers and improve packaging recycling.

Interior Minister Gerhart Baum says what happens now will show whether or not he needs to go ahead with plans for a tax on packaging to stem the tide of waste.

Ten per cent of household garbage, the Ministry says, is beverage containers, and if there were no returnable bottles (reused up to 40 times) the proportion would increase by about 20 per cent in the next few years.

Using deposit-only reusable beer bottles rather than the no-deposit no-return variety would result in an energy saving of up to 70 per cent.

So Herr Baum says the industry's undertaking is an important contribution to the fight against the throw-away mentality.

This kind of outlook contradicted a policy of conserving commodities and the environment.

By the end of this year reusable con-

Frankfurter Rundschau

tainers are to be distinctively marked so everyone will be able to see at a glance which packaging is environmentally sound.

Bottles will be standardised to rationalise recovery and cut the cost of reuse. The beverage industry has agreed to end advertising for no-deposit no-return containers.

All branches of the packaging industry (glass, board, cans and plastic) have undertaken to boost recycling perceptibly in the years to come.

Bottle manufacturers are to recycle in the medium term 1.5 million tonnes of waste glass a year instead of the present 700,000 tonnes.

The Interior Ministry says this is more than half the industry's output.

Can manufacturers have undertaken by 1985 to increase by 25 per cent on

Continued on page 10

■ FISHING

The German oyster industry begins to make up for lost time

German oysters make up nowhere even remotely near one per cent of the world's output, but they have only been farmed since 1971.

The German fishing industry abandoned the oyster as a cash catch back in 1926. In its heyday, a century ago, 500 tons a year were caught off Heligoland and in the shallows along the North Sea coast.

Today 900,000 tons of oysters, unappetising to look at but delicious to eat, lovers of sea food say, are farmed annually worldwide.

Japan and the United States are the main producers. Since 1971 Germany's experimental oyster beds have yielded between one-and-a-half and six tons a year.

They are the result of a project started by the Hamburg-based Federal Fishery Research Institute.

Cold winters, overfishing and depletion of stocks, especially of young oysters, were the German oyster's downfall in the early years of the century.

After a vain bid to restock oyster beds with Portuguese oysters the industry called it a day after the First World War, but scientists are now confident the Japanese oyster will help the industry to reestablish itself this time.

Fishery biologist Thomas Neudecker is optimistic the Japanese newcomer *will, in the right conditions, settle down off the North Frisian coast* and cater for the demand of at least north German gourmets.

For six years he has been working on the oyster project at the Hamburg institute's Baltic outstation in Langballigau, near Flensburg.

"Our oysters have so far sold well," says Neudecker, 31. "They are excellent in quality."

Ten years ago the institute imported its first 500 Japanese oyster seedlings from Scotland as the opening move in an experiment backed by the Research Ministry in Bonn.

The Japanese oyster is impervious to wide variations in salination and temperature. It is better suited than other varieties to survive tough winters, and it even flourishes in the Baltic, which has a very low salt count.

The Langballigau research station was launched in 1979 as the first oyster farm in Germany where breeding was carried out artificially.

Neudecker says the insemination rate is 95 per cent. What this means is that several thousand eggs per oyster are fertilised, resulting in 24 hours in thousands of tiny seedlings, each with its own shell, taking to the water.

He and his fellow-scientists then try to keep the junior oysters alive and well. This calls for the right water, a constant 25 degrees centigrade and special algae cultures on which they feed.

In ideal conditions the oysters double their weight weekly throughout their first year. Results have at times been so satisfactory, Neudecker says, that they can keep up with foreign breeders.

Samples have been sent to Denmark and as far afield as Yugoslavia and Israel.

There have been trials of a wide range of breeding techniques. Temperature and food are not the only criterion. The kind of container used, plastic or metal, also counts.

His latest recommendation is to glue two-year-old oysters to a metal frame with a little cement and to leave them to grow to a full 80 grams, the size at which they are best eaten, a year later.

Oyster seedings are sent from Flensburg to fishermen in Glücksburg, Sylt, Amrum, Nordstrand and Neuharlingersiel, all on the North Sea coast, who run oyster farms as a part-time job.

The oyster breeding project has so far cost DM2.5m. It will probably end in its present form at the year of next year.

But the Fishery Research Institute hopes the Langballigau outstation can be kept going with a grant from the Bonn Agriculture Ministry.

dpa

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, 8 June 1982)

Agreement

Continued from page 9

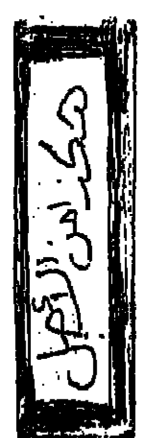
1980 the recycling of old tin cans. That would be roughly 250,000 tonnes a year.

The Minister expects retailers to provide consumers with a choice between deposit and no-return containers.

The higher recycling quota will, he says, call on local authorities with responsibility for waste disposal to reconsider priorities.

Gerda Strack

(Frankfurter Rundschau, 8 June 1982)



■ LITERATURE

Escaping the Nazi dragnet: how the family Bertini came to be

For Christmas 1955 Ralph Giordano bought my son Thomas, who was then five, a steam machine, a kind of stationary toy locomotive that belches forth smoke and works pistons at an impressive speed when fuel pellets are lit.

He had bought it three weeks earlier for DM300, or half the monthly allowance of students at the Leipzig literature institute.

He came to Leipzig from Hamburg as a comrade and KPD official to learn the trade of a socialist realist writer.

He ran the steam machine three or four times, then he was satisfied. As a child he had longed for a steam machine of his own, he explained, and now he had fulfilled his wish, albeit a little late in the day.

We thanked him profusely for the present, but he would hear nothing of it. He wasn't interested in gratitude.

We knew his childhood had been overshadowed by fascism, but he never went into details. He was a noisy, cheerful man, popular with fellow-students but already a little troublesome for the staff.

He was bound for a clash with SED and KPD officialdom. Details can be read in his book *Die Partei hat immer recht* (The Party is Always Right), written after he quit the KPD and published in 1961.

It was his first and for long his only book, because he didn't go on to become a writer as planned, not to begin with at least. His first book goes a long way towards explaining why.

The doctrines of ideology and art theory he embraced and the arts as practised in the GDR blocked his mind and halted his pen.

He made a name for himself as a TV reporter, travelling around the world and bringing back film footage about its social and political tension.

He kept on writing after all, but kept quiet about it, and now the book has finally been published. It is a novel entitled *The Bertinis*, the tale of a family.

Giacomo Bertini headed north from Sicily, determined to become a major musician. He toured the cities of Europe and stayed in Hamburg more or less by coincidence.

He became the father of a son. But it is impossible to describe the course of events satisfactorily in mere thumbnail outline, the ups and down, the tragedy and the comedy.

It is a tale of tempestuous Latin temperament and a combination of dozens of strands of story that to begin with does not read pleasurably at all.

We are told how Lea is born, a Jewess of a family that has long lived in north Germany, and how she arrives at a stepfather and a stepsister who is not a Jewess.

Lea marries Alf Bertini, son of the Sicilian, and now the family is complete, so many people with so little in common, a mass of contradictions.

So far it is a tale that might have been worth telling even without what was later to happen, but the reader knows that by now it is 1933, the year Hitler came to power.

Lea and Alf have three sons, Cesar, Roman and Ludwig. The two elder boys go to school together, and there they learn they are something they never even suspected existed: half-Jews.

Giordano had this novel on his mind for 40 years. It grew from memory into notes and file cards, then fragments he went over and reworked time and again.

The documentary aspect was overshadowed by the people who took shape in the novel, people the reader feels he understands and whose tale is so upsetting.

The Bertinis is the first novel of a man nearing 60, and it is an immediate smash hit that has earned him literary status.

Let no-one say he was already familiar with the outcome of the tale and, in broad outline, how it progressed.

Ralph Giordano: *The Bertinis*; S. Fischer Verlag, Frankfurt; pp 782; DM 39.80

The Nuremberg race laws and the commentary on them by Hans Maria Globke, who went on to serve as a leading civil servant in Bonn after the war, are the abstract.

What we see actually happening to real people in the novel takes us to the very limits of sympathy and suffering with and for them.

Much has been written in both East and West about everyday fascism and the less conventional varieties. Nowhere has the tale been told with such intensity of how it affected a family of Jews, half-Jews and non-Jews.

Regardless whether or not crimes committed during the Nazi era ever come under the statute of limitations, this novel still comes at just the right time by virtue of its moral force, its exactness and the impact of the way in which it is told.

There is the excitement of reading how Giordano, in the person of Roman Bertini, explains what prompted him to write the novel. It was reading Thomas Wolfe's *Look Homeward, Angel*, a novel that has impressed him as no other book had done beforehand.

Wolfe's novel, Giordano writes, hit Roman Bertini like "a powerful meteor that smashed through to his very innermost parts, there exploding and contaminating his blood with thousands and thousands of fragments"

The tale told in *The Bertinis* takes its inexorable course. The Nazis put out their dragnet ever closer. Hamburg is devastated in Allied bombing raids.

Even when less and less of Hitler's war machine is in working order and, finally, it no longer works at all, the Gestapo keeps up business as usual until the very end.

The family gain a breathing space when Lea, Alf and their three sons are evacuated after the bombing raids to a village between Brunswick and Magdeburg where there are not air raids every night and there are still such things as bread and bacon.

Yet even as evacuees they come under pressure. Their names have not yet been deleted from the waiting list for concentration camp. They are sent back to Hamburg.

There are no thoroughbred heroes in the novel. Everyone is worried stiff and Alf Bertini is bound to be tortured by the thought that it would all never have happened to him or anyone if only he had not married a Jewess and they had not had three sons.

The intricacies cannot be resolved without giving up himself as well, but his sons are keenly aware of the dilemma. They sense the mutual hatred born of fear that gives rise to situations worthy of classical tragedy.

In the midst of it all, bearing the burden without a shadow of guilt, is Lea, the archetype of a mother

Hamburg is burning but men, women and children wearing the Star of David are still shepherded into the open spaces near Dammtor station for transportation to concentration camps.

In February 1945, when the Allies are already at the Rhine in the west and the Oder in the east, the city's last Jews, Jewesses from mixed marriages, are shipped to Theresienstadt.

Those who help the Bertinis in one way or another are not free of fear, and at times they are helf-hearted. Roman is engaged in a life-or-death quest for a hideout in which the family can take cover when they come to take his mother away.

With the help of a woman railway worker he fits out a cellar for survival. It is covered in rubble and under water, but a man promises to keep them supplied with food.

Then, at last, the news breaks that Hamburg has capitulated and that the British have been marching north into the city for the past two hours.

"The tanks came in the late afternoon. What then crept out of the old scullery, one after another, had little left in common with humanity. It was a sight no-one could have been prepared for." As none of the Bertinis were still capable of walking upright, each moved toward the tanks as best he could, Alf and his sons went on all fours, Lea slid on her knees."

That is how they slowly emerge into a new life. Roman wants to shoot the worst of his torturers, but cannot bring himself to do it.

Lea gives birth to her fourth child, a daughter. The everyday Nazis take cover, and some try to help the Bertinis in the hope that they themselves will thus earn protection.

A year later many of them have brazenly and adeptly returned to their old jobs.

Roman Bertini believes, just as Ralph Giordano did, that the Nazis' most determined enemies, the Communist, must now be his best friends.

This belief cost him dearly for 10 long years. At the end of the novel we can arguably see Giordano's first book from afar. Many will hope he writes a sequel.

Erich Loest

(Deutsches Allgemeines Sonntagsblatt, 13 June 1982)

Erich Loest is a dissident East German writer who now lives in the West

Latin-America flavour at festival

Latin America is the keynote of this year's Horizons Festival in West Berlin, and the first week concentrated on works of literature and literary topics.

Leading Latin American writers were in Berlin for the festival, and given the growing reputation of Latin American writing they included famous names.

The wide-ranging festival programme was opened by Octavio Paz, the Mexican essayist and poet, Governing Mayor Richard von Weizsäcker and the head of the Goethe Institute.

At a well-attended gathering Paz read a selection of his poems and answered questions put by German writer Peter Hamm and his German translator Fritz Vogelsang.

This particular event was not unduly exciting, partly because the Mexican's writer's verse is fairly conventional and the questions put by his German opposite numbers failed to elicit much that was of interest.

Mario Vargas Llosa, the Peruvian writer, was another matter. Fired by knowledgeable linkmen such as François Bondy, he gave a sparkling display of rhetoric.

Unbeatable in g s. re and mimicry, he outline not only issues of Latin America's narrative prose and its European models (Llosa is the author of a highly regarded book on Flaubert), but also dealt with the plan and intentions of his latest novel.

In it he sheds light on events in north-eastern Brazil at the turn of the century, the uprising led by a "holy man" from the Sertão that was crushed by the Brazilian armed forces with much bloodshed.

The topic is an impressive demonstration of the unity of Latin American subject matter, especially as it is widely felt that Spanish America and Brazil have little in common.

Other platform discussions dealt with problems of translation, the role of women in Latin American literature, the Indians and the literary market in countries that in many cases have an extremely shaky publishing and distribution network.

Then the major regions of the subcontinent were reviewed. The Carib- was represented mainly by younger writers but the ex-president of the Dominican Republic, Juan Bosch, was in Berlin as a writer.

From Brazil there was the poet Ferreira Gullar, the novelist Loyola Brandão (whose book *Zero* has been well received in Germany) and the anthropologist and writer Darcy Ribeiro.

From the Spanish-speaking countries there was Antonio Skármeta from Chile and Augusto Roa Bastos from Paraguay, whose epic novel *I, The Almighty* is felt by connoisseurs to be arguably the most impressive piece of epic writing from contemporary Latin America, while Argentina was represented by Manuel Puig and Osvaldo Soriano.

Time and again the wide variations and distinctions in political and cultural profile of the various zones of the subcontinent came to the fore.

Caribbean writers by and large endorsed the demand for a fighting, committed literature in the service of national liberation and at times frankly called for revolution.

Countries suffering under the yoke of dictatorship, such as Argentina, Uruguay and Chile present writers and intellectuals with the gloomy prospect of exile.

Faced with this problem they showed

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■ THE CINEMA

Fassbinder: early death, life of contradictions

Rainer Werner Fassbinder, who has died in Munich aged 36, was one of the most productive, best-known and most controversial German film directors.

In a mere 14 years he directed 40 films and worked as a stage director. For a while he managed the Theater am Turm in Frankfurt.

He also directed films serialised on TV and wrote plays. He seems to have worked like a man possessed, always in search of fresh fields, self-confirmation and fame and keen to forget his own fears and weaknesses.

Fassbinder was a person full of contradictions. Throughout his career as a director he was torn between the glamour of a Hollywood style and his predilection for a mannerism that often made his films offputting for a wider public.

Only a handful of his 40 films were box office successes. They included *The Marriage of Maria Braun* and *Lili Marleen.*

Outwardly he seemed unperturbed that most of the rest appealed only to a limited audience. But he was hurt by what he thought was his talent being disregarded.

He felt misunderstood, deliberately misunderstood, and in the late 70s, when he was dogged by bad luck, flops and scandals back home, he threatened to emigrate to America.

Fassbinder is highly ratd in the United States. In 1977 a major season of his films was screened in New York. "Fassbinder," wrote the film critic of the *New York Times,* "is Europe's most talented and original director."

That was extremely gratifying, but despite his threats Fassbinder stayed in Germany and kept on working until, in 1979, his *Maria Braun* vindicated him at the box office.

He was born in 1946 in Bad Wörishofen, the Bavarian water cure spa. His father was a doctor, his mother an interpreter. But even the date of his birth is shrouded in the secrecy Fassbinder so loved.

Some sources say he was born on 13 February, others on 31 May. Fassbinder himself refused to say which was the right date. But he frankly admitted to the failure that marked the start of his career 18 years ago.

He failed the entrance exam for the Berlin Film Academy. So did directors Werner Schroeter and Rosa von Praunheim.

He then moved to Munich and worked as an extra at the *Kammerspiele,* taking acting lessons at the Leonhard School of Drama, where he met Hanna Schygulla, who was his leading lady for many years.

In Munich he launched his first theatre in a disused cinema. It was a short-lived venture named *anti-theater.* The name conveys an idea of what he had in mind.

Fassbinder sought to part company with theatrical tradition. He saw the stage as a peep show at which the audience witnessed strange events that had nothing to do with reality, not even conventional stage reality.

He directed classics such as Büchner's *Leonce and Lena* and plays of his own, such as *Katzelmacher,* which he was later to film, invariably with his often exaggerated tendency to artificially overstate his case, as it were.

He was very fond of this artificiality. That was why he was so keen on the films of Douglus Sirk, the Hollywood director of German extraction whose actors act on the screen as though they were separated from reality by a pane of glass.

Fassbinder once explained in an interview his predilection for unimpassioned, detached cast management resulting in a withdrawal of audience sympathy with the figures on the screen.

"The more beautiful films are," he said, "the more clipped and artificial, the freer and more liberating they are."

This tenet was one he chose to keep to in his later films in particular, which did not, as his earlier work had done, concentrate on migrant workers and the working class, left-wing extremism and factory workers.

But the link with his early period remained his critique of what he called petty bourgeoisie, which he showed up in a distorting mirror in the pomp and frippery of films such as *Lili Marleen, Lola* and *Despair* (based on the Nabokov novel).

Films seeped in beauty or pseudo-beauty were not the ones that made his name and consolidated his reputation, however. Neither were his attempts to make political films, which invaribly fell foul of his subjective and emotional outlook.

The Fassbinder films that stand out in the memory are films widely ranging in character and style.

There is his 1973 saga of a migrant worker *Angst essen Seele auf* (Anxiety Consumes the Soul) and his distin[guished] 1974 film of Fontane's novel *Effi Bri[est].*

Effi Briest was one of the few Fa[ss]binder films in which emotions w[ere] displayed openly and strongly and [not] hidden either under a mountain of [su]gar candy or beneath extremely com[]plex mistakes and confusions.

Then there is his 1979 success *Th[e] Marriage of Maria Braun,* first-rate [ci]nema that contrasts sharply with [his] TV serial version of Döblin's 20s no[vel] *Berlin Alexanderplatz.*

It remains to be seen whether his la[st] film, *Querelle,* which he was able [to] shoot but not to finish, will be a maj[or] or a minor Fassbinder.

In trying to sound out the limits of the screen, the medium he loved, Fass[]binder also sought to discover his ow[n] limitations. The result was an oeuv[re] full of contradictions and incongruities.

But he can fairly be said, hackneyed though the judgement may be, and du[e] in part to the quantity and variety of his work, to have been a director who ma[de] screen history.

Margarete von Schwarzkopf

(Die Welt, 11 June 1982)



Fassbinder . . . felt misunderstood (Photo: [illegible])

A touch of Latin America

Continued from page 11

signs of depression, despair, pessimism and indecision. Brazil, in contrast, is currently benefiting from a partial loosening of the reins by its military government.

This opening, with the difficulties and opportunities it presented, was discussed at length.

Presentation of the platform debates was not as good as it might have been, according to the many members of the audience who spoke Spanish or Portuguese and were familiar with the countries in question.

Horst Bienek, Christoph Buch and Peter Schneider chaired debates with a display of Eurocentric ignorance that merely showed their Latin American colleagues how little German intellectuals know about the sub-continent.

Apart froma thin veneer of academic experts, enthusiastic translators and courageous publishers Germany lacks an understanding reading public for Latin American literature.

It proved impossible, characteristically so with intellectuals, it could be argued, to arrive at a common denominator of the wide range of topics and programmes discussed.

There was little to call a halt to the delight of the Latins in public speaki[ng] with the result that all too often no ti[me] was left for further exploration of co[n]troversial aspects.

This was partly because time [was] short, partly because writers and fi[lm] men felt a need to sound a note of ha[r]mony.

Even so, it was the first opportunity [a] German audience has ever had of se[e]ing for itself well-known writers such [as] Juan Rulfo of Mexico.

Rulfo published two short volumes [of] short stories 30 years ago and has si[nce] published nothing, yet he is still co[nsi]dered to be a leading light of Mexi[can] literature.

In a quiet but exciting afternoon s[es]sion Günter Grass read three short s[to]ries of Rulfo's in German translatio[n]. Rulfo, he said, was a writer who h[ad] greatly influenced him.

The writer then read his stories in [the] original Spanish. He sounded mod[est,] restrained, even tired in compari[son] with such a talented, deep-voiced sp[ea]ker as Grass.

It was a very successful event in t[he] wide range of programmes forming p[art] of the Horizons Festival.

Hanspeter Brode

(Mannheimer Morgen, 9 June 1982)

■ MEDICINE

The running problems of going on holiday in faraway places

One in four adults came home sick from holidays in countries with [] climates, experts were told at a Mu[ni]ch congress on tourism, travel and [he]alth.

Children fared worse, returning ill or [bad]ly in need of rest. Holidays in the [tem]perate zones of Europe also had [he]alth hazards.

Causes, prevention and cure were de[bat]ed by specialists from 12 countries at [a] conference held by the German Green Cross and the World Health Organisa[t]ion.

Diarrhoea, they were told, headed the [li]st, accounting for 35 per cent of the [s]ick. It was due mainly to poor hygiene.

"You need only clean your teeth with [w]ater that has not been boiled or take [i]ce in a drink to be affected," said Pro[f]essor Friedrich Deinhardt.

A specialist in virus complaints, he advised tourists who visited the tropics [al]ways to have a mixture of salt and su[ga]r handy.

There was also a first-rate drug now [o]n the market that sucessfully treated [di]arrhoea of all kinds.

Water filters as mainly used by cam[]pers were not much good. They kept bacteria out but not viruses, and while most purifiers reduced the risk, they could not entirely sterilise the water.

One doctor told the congress there were even mineral waters it would be better to boil before drinking.

A Munich hospital reported a 100-per-cent increase in food poisoning cases treated in September and October, after the holiday season.

Constipation came next, accounting for 15 per cent of travel ailments. Causes mentioned in Munich included both psychic reasons and the more mundane lack of movement in cars, trains and aircraft.

Not eating enough salad was another reason, due no doubt to fear of contracting diarrhoea.

Professor Deinhardt advised tourists to eat plenty of thick-skinned fruit and vegetables such as oranges and bananas. They were safe.

Insomnia during or immediately after a holiday came third on the list with 10 per cent.

Bad Wiessee pharmacist Dr. Wolfgang Schlemmer said it was due to unusually high noise levels in southern countries and to jet lag in international travel.

So the first-aid kit tourists should take with them ought to include ear plugs and sleeping tablets.

Feverish colds came fourth with five per cent. Dr Schlemmer said nose drops and throat pastilles were best, with possibly an antibiotic for longer journeys.

Other complaints during or after holidays, including increasingly frequent cases of hepatitis B, did not amount to more than one per cent.

They were often due to the individual holidaymaker's general state of health, the congress was told, and to conditions to which he or she paid too little attention.

Most tourists needed to know beforehand or be briefed by their general practitioner on acute illnesses or the likelihood of their suffering from complaints such as eye inflammation, athlete's foot, piles, feeling bloated, high blood pressure and the like.

About 16 per cent of travellers on board ship who needed medical care were found to have been suffering from their complaint beforehand.

The trend toward sporting holidays led to an additional accident risk, said Munich orthopaedic surgeon Professor Bernd Rosemeyer.

There was a particularly heavy increase in the number of skiing injuries last winter sport season. Joggers and wind surfers were also increasingly requiring orthopaedic and surgical attention in holiday resorts.

"Many people are no longer content to play sport in the normal manner," he said, "with the result that surfing in strong winds, trick surfing and surfing in heavy swell lead to serious injuries."

Professor Rosemeyer's father was, incidentally, a racing driver who was killed in a speed record bid in 1938. His mother, aviator Elly Beinhorn, is 75 and in perfect health.

Tourists who went in for water sports, he said, ought not to be dissuaded by the risks but they should bear them in mind and try to make sure they did not end up in what could be a poorly equipped hospital far away from home.

Diving too was increasingly dangerous with growing popularity, said Munich forensic scientist Professor Wolfgang Eisenmenger.

Improved diving equipment made diving seem easy and trouble-free, but the number of injuries was on the increase because divers underestimated the risks. They were also unaware of basic laws of physics.

Serious water sports accidents were on the increase partly because many lakes and waterways were much more crowded than they used to be, said insurance director Dr Karl Lochmaier.

Over the past 10 years sports accidents have made up between 11 and 14 per cent of claims on private accident insurance policies by adults.

Sports mishaps accounted for between 14 and 17 per cent of claims among children, and the tendency was toward a further increase.

Karl Stankiewitz

(Mannheimer Morgen, 5 June 1982)

French advice on money and health

The French used to say that you had to make your fortune by the time [yo]u were 40 so as to be able to give [yo]ur health undivided attention.

Germans today seem to share a little [o]f this outlook. Until they are 40 most [f]eel as strong as a lion and in good or [v]ery good health.

Then the crunch comes. Only 39 per [c]ent of the over-40s feel quite so sang[u]ine about their health, 27 per cent of the over-50s and 22 per cent of the over-[60]s.

These conclusions are reached from [po]lls of between 1,500 and over 10,000 [pe]ople made for a Cologne drug manu[fac]turer.

A surprisingly large number of peo[p]le were undergoing medical treatment [wh]en they were questioned.

The percentages were 27 in the 18-39 [age] group, 39 among the over-40s, 56 [amo]ng the over-50s and 63 among the [ov]er-60s.

Twenty-four per cent of the over-50s [an]d 36 per cent of the over-60s said [the]y had been under doctor's orders for [t]he past year.

Only one person in four over 50 said [h]e had not been to the doctor's for [mo]nths.

The over-60s said their most frequent [co]mplaints were heart and circulation [di]seases, rheumatism, slipped discs and [in]somnia.

Three out of four patients said they [on]ly bought medicine when advised to [d]o so by their doctor or when they were [gi]ven a prescription.

Fifty-four per cent claimed to read the instruction leaflets.

Horst Wefelnberg/dpa

(Hamburger Abendblatt, 9 June 1982)

Psychosomatic link with rheumatism

Rheumatism could be psychosomatic, doctors were told at an in-service training course at the West Berlin international congress centre.

Few general practitioners would be likely to put down patients' rheumatism to mental difficulties.

Specialists in skin diseases could not be expected to realise that psoriasis attacks were often caused by anxiety or mental anguish of one kind or another either.

Not even the patients themselves were always prepared to believe that there was a straightforward psychosomatic explanation for a physical complaint.

Yet specialists no longer had any doubts on the subject. They were convinced that mental upsets, times dating back to childhood, could trigger or be largely to blame for physical illness.

This had frequently been observed in the case of rheumatism and psoriasis, Michael Lukas Möller and Hans Henning Studt told the congress.

Both specialise in psychosomatic illness, Professor Möller at Giessen University, Professor Studt at the Free University in West Berlin.

They agreed that doctors often were a greater help to their patients with a talk about the mental background to the complaint than when they prescribed any amount of drugs.

Everyone will appreciate that continual inner tension due to anxiety, anger, disappointment or humiliation may lead to muscular cramp that causes rheumatism in the neck or back.

Continual muscular cramp, Professor Studt said, could play a part in causing morbid changes in the spinal chord, the discs and the vertebrae.

All that was then needed was a particularly clumsy movement or an unaccustomed physical strain for an acute or increasingly chronic case of rheumatism to occur.

The patient, he said, usually attributed the complaint to the movement or the strain.

Cases of inflammation of the joints, of rheumatoid arthritis, could take a similar course, except that infections and immunological factors also played a part.

Where does muscular tension originate that leads to bone and joint damage? Professor Studt said that the groundwork was often laid in childhood.

People who suffered from rheumatism had often been found to have had a dominating, aggressive mother and a weak and submissive father, or vice-versa.

From childhood they were taught to do what they were told, to be highly efficient and quietly tolerant, coupled with exaggerated readiness to help.

A typical case history, said Professor Studt, was that of a patient with a tyrannical mother who had suffered for five years from a rheumatic neck as part of a neck and spinal chord syndrome.

At 26 he had married a girl of 19, a nondescript young thing he, as the helper born, had hoped to make something out of.

He succeeded. Before long his wife was an attractive woman who appealed to other men and herself felt attracted to another man.

This was roughly the time at which the patient began to complain of a stiff and painful neck.

"Only in the course of psychotherapy," said Professor Studt, "was he able to admit to himself the disappointed aggression he felt.

"He only felt well when he was able to dominate his fellow-men by being helpful."

The origins of psoriasis often lay way back in the childhood, said Professor Möller, who referred to the case of a 23-year-old man who had his first attack during a love affair.

It turned out that as a baby he had been deprived of skin contact with his mother, which is crucially important in fostering a sense of physical and mental comfort.

He was at long last able to make good this deprivation of affection by skin contact with the woman he loved, but suddenly old fears of being disappointed and rejected were unconsciously reawakened.

Skin is often called the visiting card of the personality or mirror of the soul. His responded with a disease suggestive of the psyche trying to armour-plate itself against fresh injury.

Professor Möller may be right in saying that psoriasis attacks are often more frequent after mental upsets and that nearly half his patients admitted they had been having 'trouble' shortly beforehand.

But it would be as well not to assume that everyone processes mental strain in exactly the same way. The same stress, he said, could worsen the condition in one patient while alleviating it in another.

The conclusion to be reached is that general practitioners must spend more time talking with the psoriasis and rheumatism patient about his or her individual condition and background.

Dieter Dietrich

(Hannoversche Allgemeine, 5 June 1982)

■ BEHAVIOUR

No one checked as Gerhard lay dead for seven years

DIE WELT

A Munich man lay dead in his bed-sitting room for seven years before he was found.

Two more corpses were discovered in Munich apartments not long after the first case made headline news.

Three people shared Gerhard König's apartment. "König, ring twice," the nameplate read. For an incredible seven years the postman rang twice without getting an answer.

König had died unnoticed in spring 1975. He suffocated in a small fire in his room. No-one missed him in all those years.

Seven years is a sad record even in an age that seems to have developed to a fine art the social and technological prerequisites of total solitude.

"It's a metropolitan problem," says a spokesman for Munich police, and he is right up to a point, but the roots of Gerhard König's problems dated back to the darkest days of German history.

He was born in Breslau, Silesia, in 1907 and married a local girl three years before the Second World War. He had two daughters but the family was separated by the war.

His wife and the two children settled in the part of Germany that was later to *become the Federal Republic. She had* no news of him for years, so she had him declared dead and then remarried.

He resurfaced in Breslau towards the end of the war and also headed west, but for reasons we may never know he made no attempt to find out where his family were.

His wife did not find out until 1950 that he was still alive, but she no longer felt able to give up her new family. Two years later they were divorced and custody of the younger daughter was awarded to the father.

He worked regularly, first as an office messenger, than as a scrap dealer, as long as his daughter stayed with him at a farm in Upper Bavaria.

Then, at 21, she left after a quarrel with him. He began to decline and ended up being allocated a bed-sitting room in Munich.

He paid DM72 rent per month, plus DM5 toward the cost of electricity, gas and water. The money was remitted by standing order from his bank account, into which a monthly pension of just over DM400 was paid.

The standing order was kept up by the bank's computer. His rent was paid regularly, while over the years the balance of his pension built up into a nest-egg of DM35,000.

And no-one noticed anything was wrong, or rather, those that ought to have done failed to do so out of negligence or human weakness.

Two others, for instance, who had rooms in the same apartment. One was only too happy to see no more of him. The other was seldom in the apartment anyway.

Then there were the postmen, several of them over the years. They were surprised at the many letters that never *seemed to be opened* but did nothing about it.

The bank was unable to get his statement to him through the post and made an inquiry to the registry office to see if he was still registered at his last address. The inquiry went unanswered.

When his polling card was sent back to the returning officer marked "Delivery impossible, letter-box overflowing" the case was closed with the simple entry: "Has moved. New address unknown."

No-one bothered to check. Even the caretaker of the apartment block couldn't be bothered to disturb the peace of the dead.

No-one at the housing company's office saw fit to do anything either. Herr König's consumption of electric power and water had been nil for years, but the staff saw no need to put two and two together.

The pension authority stayed his pension in March because there had been no replies to their postal inquiries, and when the money stopped coming, action was suddenly taken.

His daughters have since turned up, leaving it to the legal profession to decide whether the pension fund is entitled not only to the balance of his bank account but also to the rent paid over the years.

At this stage, when all bar the talking was over, the fire brigade was called to put out a fire in an apartment block on the other side of the city.

A TV set had caught fire and the firemen had to enter the apartment underneath, where they discovered a 48-year-old man who had committed suicide a fortnight earlier and also gone unnoticed and unmissed.

Now a third corpse has been discovered in Munich, the body of a 47-year-old man who probably died on May Day and was likewise not missed.

The caretaker was alarmed by the unpleasant smell and by newspaper reports of the other two cases.

Josef Kistler, spokesman for the Munich police, has referred to the anonymity of large apartment blocks.

But people seem not to worry about what goes on around them when they can watch the much more exciting progress of world affairs on their TV screens every evening.

Peter Schmalz

(Die Welt, 11 June 1982)

Academics are fooled by the Moonies

The Moonies say they are stepping up their activities in Germany, and they clearly seem to be concentrating on the universities.

Norbert Thiel, a spokesman for the Unification Church of God, says, 300 members of an international missionary team have moved into Germany from Britain since February 1981.

Well-known German university professors have for years attended international scientific congresses held by the Moonies, who in 1979 were described at a US Congressional hearing as an anti-democratic political party.

Some of them admit to having known who invited them. Others say they had no idea who the congresses were sponsored by.

They had only realised as the conference progressed that the Moonies were behind it and had bankrolled the proceedings.

When they accepted the invitation to attend the gathering free of charge, including a complimentary flight, they were completely in the dark.

"A number of dons looked distinctly crestfallen," said one participant at the November 1981 congress in Seoul, Korea, which was attended by about 30 university lecturers from the Federal Republic of Germany.

Very few admitted to having known what they were letting themselves in for and to not having gone unprepared.

They included Peter Meyer-Dohm, a former vice-chancellor of Bochum University, and Lothar Bossle of Würzburg University.

Professor Dieter Cassel of Duisburg emphasised that everyone who attended these congresses was bound to realise that the Moonies were behind them.

Herr Thiel, representing the Church's German unit, with headquarters in Frankfurt, say the Rev. Sun-Myung Moon appears in person at the gatherings as their sponsor.

The International Conference on the Unity of the Sciences is held annually by the International Cultural Foundation. Both are referred to in official Moonie publications as associate organisations.

German dons asked by *Deutsche Presse-Agentur* why they took part said they enjoyed the travel and were impressed by the inter-disciplinary orientation and participation of highly-qualified and renowned colleagues.

The annual gatherings have indeed always been attended by reputed scientists, Nobel laureates and members of the Club of Rome.

Their declared aim is unity of the sciences. The Unification Church says conferences are intended to promote exchange and cooperation between various disciplines.

Most German dons questioned by *DPA* said they were held along strictly scientific lines. Professor Meyer-Dohm was surprised at the organisers' restraint.

But the Rev. Moon always delivers a speech in person to the plenary session. Inspired by a vision of Christ and believing himself to be a new Messiah, he reveals himself at the conference as a root-and-branch anti-Communist.

It follows from his ideology that the Unification Church must seek to gain influence in all sectors of society, and scientists are of particular importance in his political strategy.

Professor Bossle, for instance, was asked to arrange a meeting between the Rev. Moon and Bavarian Premier Franz Josef Strauss. He declined.

Professor Peter Kielmannsegg of Cologne unsuspectingly accepted an invitation to attend a Moonie conference in Los Angeles and felt he had been misled. He wouldn't have gone if he had known where the money was coming from.

dpa

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, 3 June 1982)

Sex goes to the heart of the problem

Sex can make or break a relationship. So can differences in temperament. Marital troubles are usually due to problems in either or both, especially if the husband or wife feels neglected.

Money, work or the home are much less important in comparison, psychiatrists say in an survey commissioned by the Scientific Research Association.

The Max Planck Institute of Psychiatry, Munich, selected two groups, each of 100 couples, for the project. The first consisted of problem couples, average age 32 and six years married, the other of "normal" couples for comparison.

About three out of four people undergoing therapy were found to d… over sex, temperament and the affection shown by their partner.

Roughly half also complained of quarrels about annoying personal traits or habits of the partner and differences of opinion on leisure activities, how to bring up the children and views classified under the heading *Weltanschauung.*

Those who were sexually dissatisfied wanted more tenderness, emotional… initiative, activity and relief from the monotony of everyday life.

They would also like to be able to talk more about what they feel they need, including the desire for greater understanding when they happen not to feel "in form."

This was a point on which the partner was usually expected to talk more, to listen more, to accept the interview… more and to show spontaneous affection more often in conversation.

The partner ought, it was felt, to le… more support and provide protection from others, to be more active and outgoing, more optimistic and easy-going.

In leisure activities what is felt to be missing is more things done together and less sitting in front of the TV set. In bringing up the children more affection, more patience and quiet are called for.

The partner is also expected to punish the children less and not be as authoritarian, to deal more closely with them and pay attention to them. *dpa*

(Mannheimer Morgen, 29 May 1982)

Dreadful plight of addiction to work

Professor Hermann Dietz, a Hanover specialist in psychosomatic complaints, deals in *Lutherische Monatshefte,* the Lutheran monthly, with what can happen when people grow addicted to work.

Workoholics take highly-rated qualities such as hard work, perseverance, success orientation and ambition to such a degree that behavioural disturbances and other serious consequences occur in the form of what can only be termed an addiction.

As in most cases of addiction, the initial symptoms seem harmless. Ambitious people tend to camouflage their work in their own eyes and in those of others.

Reading that is necessitated by work is classified as a leisure activity, the…

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CHILDREN

Old-fashioned pencil and slate 'still the best'

Frankfurter Allgemeine

Research workers at Aachen University say the best way to learn how to write is by using pencil and slate.

So the old slate pencil is awarded top marks, albeit a soft slate pencil, and not a lead pencil, a felt-tipped pen or any other kind of writing implement.

Their writing style is more attractive and, surprisingly, they spell better. Children learn better how to form letters and write more smoothly.

This is not a passing phase. Beginners who learnt to write using pencil and slate before changing to a fountain pen continue to write more smoothly and more accurately.

Symptoms of inhibition and disinhibition, such as cramped writing or running off the line, were less apparent.

Even a mere six months' slate training proved effective, as Professor Friedrich Steinwachs explained at a gathering arranged by the Scientific Research Association.

He recently retired as head of the psychology department at Aachen, where the survey was done.

Dr Walter Edelmann dealt mainly with micromotoric control in writing pressure, pace and rhythm and with slate and pencil and exercise book and pencil as writing materials.

Dr Arthur Schirmer concentrated on the influence of felt-tipped pens, fountain pens and slate pencils on writing development.

Dr Edelmann spent 18 months investigating two primary school classes taught to write using slates and two classes taught by using exercise books.

Dr Schirmer spent two years investigating eight classes in three different primary schools before arriving at his findings.

Dr Edelmann found that slate children were initially slower at writing than exercise-book children, but they wrote more smoothly.

Slate children interrupted their writing less often, did not press so hard on the surface of their material and thus avoided the stoppages due to pressure that often trouble beginners.

In the course of a slower but more flowing movement children are less likely to spoil the intended shape of the letter or the word.

Writing with a slate pencil is less tiring.

The overall appearance of the handwriting of slate children was much more highly rated than that of exercise-book children by experienced primary school teachers.

Children who use lead pencils and exercise books write fast but have to stop more often, with the result that their handwriting flows less smoothly.

Since slate children write more rhythmically and harmonically, they would seem to write less tensely than exercise-book children, Dr Edelmann concluded.

They gradually come to write in a less cramped style, but their handwriting runs off the line more often.

This is a phenomenon apparent throughout the writing style of exercise-book children. Their handwriting is not as attractive as that of the slate kids.

Dr Schirmer also found the slate pencil to be more satisfactory than the felt pen, which acted as a brake for reflection on spontaneous movement.

Children generally tend to press too hard on their pen or pencil when learning to write. Pencils are broken, felt tips blunted and nibs bent.

This heavy pressure seems to have a beneficial effect when brought to bear on a slate. It teaches children to mark out their letter outlines better than when using felt pens.

The experts have yet to decide whether slate children's better handwriting is due to this factor or to the fact that writing on a slate is less strenuous.

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 5 June 1982)

Restrictions on beer sales stiffened

The 1957 Youth Protection Act has been updated to allow 14-year-olds to go to the discotheque, whereas alcohol may only be sold over the counter to 16-year-olds.

It used to be the other way round, with only 16-year-olds being allowed to go dancing, whereas 14-year-olds could buy beer and wine.

Youth protection regulations are unpopular. Young people take a dim view of them, and so do tradesmen. Parents are not too keen either, unless the regulations happen to relieve them of responsibility.

Few will object to the bid to stem the tide of alcoholism among young people. When supplies of beer in the refrigerator are running low, parents will now in many cases have to fetch a few more themselves.

This will make definite sense to anyone who has seen virtual children blue all their pocket money on cans of beer. Experts are not alone in realising how easily this form of showing off in front of friends can become first a habit, then an addiction.

Another amendment to the Act is that game slot machines may no longer be installed where under-18s have access to them.

This is doubtless splendid on paper, but will it not be possible to ignore the new regulations just as the old ones were ignored in many cases because they were not strictly enforced?

Disco managers are sure to say they cannot insist on ID cards being shown every time a beer is ordered.

Youth clubs and discos where mostly young people congregate need not lose money by banning beer and only selling soft drinks. Most kids are there for the music, not for the drink.

Bar and disco owners will certainly have to come up with a good excuse. The ceiling for fines has been increased from DM1,000 to DM10,000 for a breach of the Youth Protection Act.

But lawmakers can do nothing about what goes on in the home. They never have been able to. Young people continue to be allowed to watch war films on TV and are offered a glass of sparkling wine as a "joke."

Ada Brandes

(Deutsches Allgemeines Sonntagsblatt, 13 June 1982)

Workoholics

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start surreptitiously taking files home and then on holiday.

Neglect of the family and personal interests gives rise to feelings of guilt, but they are not admitted to be what they are.

"They compensate a modicum of embarrassment about always working by despising others who do anything else, such as playing golf or going away for the weekend and the like," Professor Dietz writes.

Workoholics do not feel quite as guilty as other addicts, however. What they accomplish by virtue of their addiction are achievements that are highly rated by society.

The workoholic makes sure he always has work in hand by taking on extra work, either at work or in his club or association. It takes work to keep him going: he is too tired or exhausted to do anything else.

In common with other addicts, workoholics feel their capacity is unlimited and steadily exhaust their physical strength.

Whether or not therapy will succeed, he writes, depends to a large extent on how far the addict manages, with help from his therapist and family, to arrive at fresh targets and meaning in life.

epd

(Süddeutsche zeitung, 3 June 1982)

The games that grandma used to play

Children nowadays are not interested only in computer and TV games, robots, skateboards and the cube, says ethnologist Dr Alois Döring.

Many games their grandparents played are still very much in vogue, he claims. Dr Döring spent over a year questioning 1,300 old people about the games they played as children.

His aim, as commissioned by the Bonn department of ethnology, was to find out what changes children's games have undergone over the past century.

Stilts, kites and diabolo were evergreens, he found, but skipping and hopscotch were just as popular as ever too. The top, kept spinning by whipping it with a rope, has even staged a comeback.

Toy manufacturers stopped making tops about 20 years ago, but so many parents and children have been clamouring for them at toy shops that they have started making them again.

But many old games have disappeared, Dr Döring says, because grandparents and parents have failed to hand them on to the children.

In Cologne, on the other hand, there has been a revival of skipping rhymes sung by children at play.

An older person seems to have shown a child the games he or she played long ago and the children promptly relearnt the old favourites.

That still leaves many old games that have gone for good. Old people Dr Döring questioned were enthusiastic about willow twigs they had made sticks or whistles out of as children.

But where are city kids to get hold of willow twigs these days? There is no longer anywhere for them to play at marbles, and when they chalk hopscotch squares on the pavement they promptly get into trouble.

Many old people told Dr Döring that children today had much less time and even less room in which to play than they had.

They have less time because they often have to travel a long way to school, have lessons in the afternoon and more homework to do.

Traffic is so busy that they can no longer play catch-as-catch-can or roll a hoop down the road. There is a clear trend toward regimentation, with children being sent to playgrounds they often dislike.

A further problem is that children used to visit a local school and went out to play together in the afternoon. Now they often attend a variety of schools, some far apart, and friends at school are seldom in a position to team up for play in the afternoon. Finding playmates has grown harder.

Children nowadays next to never make toys of their own, and typical boys' or girls' toys seem to be on the way out too. There are boys that play with dolls and girls that play at marbles.

Dr Döring catalogued over 600 games, and he was often asked whether old games might not be taught anew to ensure their survival.

His oldest informant, Hubert Otten from Waldfeucht, near Heinsberg, is 107. His favourite game a century ago was called Horsemill.

It consisted of ramming a post into the ice and fixing a chain to the post. Then the kids careered round the post on sledges.